SAFARNAMA AND ZAFARNAMA

By
GIANI ISHAR SINGH NARA

Abridged and translated into English

By
JOGINDER SINGH M.A.

1985

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11/3287 Delhi Gate Bazar,
New Delhi-110002.

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SAFARNAMA AND ZAFARNAMA

(Being an account of the travels of Guru Gobind Singh and the Epistle of Moral Victory written by him to emperor Aurangzeb)

By

GIANI ISHAR SINGH NARA

(Author of 'Raja Yogi', 'Baba Sri Chand', 'Baisakh Nahin Katak', Sri Japji Parmarth', 'Panthak Mukadma')

Abridged and translated into English

By

JOGINDER SINGH M.A.

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Guru Gobind Singh

ਪ੍ਰਾਰਥਨਾ

ਦੇਹ ਸ਼ਿਵਾ ਬਰ ਮੋਹਿ ਇਹੈ, ਸ਼ੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਟਰੋਂ ।।
ਨ ਡਰੋਂ ਅਰਿ ਸੋ ਜਬ ਜਾਇ ਲਰੋਂ,' ਨਿਸਚੈ ਕਰ ਅਪਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕਰੋਂ ।।
ਅਰੁ ਸਿਖਹੋ ਆਪਨੇ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਕੌ, ਇਹ ਲਾਲਚ ਹਉ ਗੁਨ ਤਉ ਉਚਰੋਂ ।।
ਜਬ ਆਵ ਕੀ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਧਾਨ ਬਨੈ, ਅਤ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੋਂ ।।

(ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ)

Prayer

O Lord, these boons of Thee I ask—
Let me never shun a righteous task,
Let me be fearless when I go to battle,
Give me faith that victory will be mine,
Give me power to sing Thy praise.
And when comes the time to end my life,
Let me fall in mighty strife.

(Guru Gobind Singh)

Dedication

This research-based life history of Guru Gobind Singh, the saviour of Hindus, Hindi and Hindustani culture is dedicated to the well-wishers of our ancient heritage and to the truth-loving and God-fearing intellectuals and scholars of Sikh history, living in India and abroad.

GURU GOBIND SINGH'S MIRACLE

(Extract from Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's letter published in the Baisakhi Number of the "Spokesman" 1956)

Guru Gobind Singh was besieged at Anandpur for three years ; his two elder sons died fighting at Chamkaur ; the two younger ones, innocents of 7 and 5, were first entombed alive and when a tremor of the earth demolished the wall, leaving them yet alive, they were literally slaughtered as sheep and goats by butchers ! Guru Gobind Singh created and organised, vitalised and militarised the Khalsa. He created heroes out of dross and earth clods. Truly, he turned sparrows into hawks, lambs into lions, lumps of clay into heroes. For 1000 years, after the defeat of Raja Jaipal, India had lain prostrate. The raiders and invaders descended on India and took away the people, to be sold as slaves. People watched and had not the courage to strike a blow in defence of their weeping. wailing, sobbing, groaning mothers,sisters and daughters. (These tragic scenes were repeated in 1947 !) Alas, poor India suffered unfathomable anguish. Guru Gobind Singh raised the Khalsa to defy religious intolerance, religious persecution and political inequality. It was a miracle that heroes appeared out of straws and common clay. Those who grovelled in the dust rose proud, defiant and invincible in the form of the Khalsa. They bore all sufferings and unnamable tortures cheerfully und unflinchingly, and accepted martyrdom for over fifty years in the first half of 18th Century, in the time of Bahadur Shah, Farrukh Siyar, Mir Mannu and Zakariya Khan, Bhai Taru Singh suffered martyrdom in 1738 and Bhai Mani Singh in 1750. Their martyrdom did not go in vain. On their ashes, on their blood and bones, was laid the foundation of the Sikh empire which was

secular in character and which blocked the Khyber pass. India was spared the anguish which invaders had repeatedly inflicted on Iadia for about 1000 years, How very painful that many delightful people in the Punjab should forget this miracle of Guru Gobind Singh ! The amiable scribe of the premier daily of Delhi had the brazen-faced hardihood of calling the great benefactor of India a fifth columnist. What an odious epithet ! But let is pass.

India is at long last free. This freedom is the crown and climax and a logical corollary to the Sikh Guru's and Khalsa's terrific sacrifices and heroic exploits. The Khalsa's traditions must inspire the Sikhs to live and die (if need be) for India's freedom. No cause could be worthier nobler, grander, dearer.

Grateful thanks of the author are due to

(1) His holiness (Late) Sant Ishar Singh Ji of Rarha Sahib
Who cherished the high ideals of Guru Kalghidhar, from his very childhood —
Who himself took 'Khande-Ki-Pahul' (Amrit) and administered it to others —
Who built Gurdwaras at several places and started 'Guru-Ka-Langar' there —
Who endeared the people to Sikh Dharma through Kirtan and Prachar —
and who, pleased with the research work, helped the author liberally with finances and thus enabled him to publish the book in Punjabi in 1971.

(2) His Holiness (Late) Sant Teja Singh Ji of Mastuana and Sant Giani Narinjan Singh Ji of Patiala who prompted him to write this book, at Gur Sagar, Mastuana.

(3) Principal Satbir Singh who reminded him and persuaded him again to undertake this work, in a meeting held in Sapru House, New Delhi in connection with the Third Centenary Celebrations of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

(4) Sardar Tej Partap Singh, 23 Barakhamba Road, New Delhi who, after reading the book in Punjabi, prompted him to have the work translated into English.

And

(5) Lastly, to Sardar Joginder Singh M.A., who undertook the work of translation with zeal and devotion, checked the proofs and saw the book through the Press, from beginning to end.

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PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

'Nama' is a Persian word intended to convey to one or more persons, in a documented form, the views or feelings of the writer and promises or agreements made regarding certain important subjects, e.g., Rehan Nama (Mortgage Deed), Iqrar Nama (Promissary Note), Sharait Nama (Contract Deed), Rahit Nama (Code of Discipline), Hukam Nama (Commandment of Temporal or Spiritual Authority), etc.

In his autobiography "Bachittar Natak", Guru Gobind Singh has described how from his previous life of meditation in Hemkunt, the Himalayan abode with seven snow-clad hilltops, he had, under divine commandment, taken birth in Patna (Bihar) in the house of Guru Teg Bahadur and Mata Gujri, and how after six years of stay there and in compliance with his father's wishes he travelled, along with his family, to Anandpur in the Punjab. From there he, at the invitation of the local Raja, went to Paonta where he had to fight the battle of Bhangani with the combined forces of the hill chieftains who were, out of jealousy, inimically inclined towards him. He had to take up cudgels with the imperial armies also and after fighting several skirmishes with them, leave the fort of Anandpur to proceed towards the Deccan. On the way he had to engage the enemy hordes at Chamkaur and again at Mukatsar before reaching Nanded on the banks of the Godavri in Maharashtra from where he ultimately left for his heavenly abode in 1708 A.D. Thus he undertook seventeen journeys in all which have been described in detail under Safar Nama in this book.

In one of the journeys, while resting at Sabo-Ki-Talwandi (Damdama Sahib) in Malwa territory, Guru Gobind Singh wrote, in Persian verse, the famous Zafar

Nama (Epistle of Moral victory) to emperor Aurangzeb, then in the Deccan, in which he chastised the latter for his cruel deeds and recorded the triumph of truth over falsehood and deception in which the imperial government and its armies had indulged for getting the fort of Anandpur vacated by him. He also accused him of killing his four young sons and thousands of his followers in surprise and inhuman attacks, Some portions of that Epistle of Victory are reproduced in this book, along with their translation in English.

An attempt has also been made at the end to remove several historical inaccuracies and misunderstandings about the life and work of Guru Gobind Singh whose achievements in the short spell of fortytwo years of age in different spheres of activitees are nothing short of miracles. In doing so, I had to do some original research work by visiting several places personally and collecting authentic evidence as well as unrecorded source material–and that too single-handed at an advanced stage of my life.

Let me hope that the discerning readers will appreciate the arrangement of the book and value the efforts made in co-relating and compiling vast amount of material in one handy volume, to the everlasting glory of the great Guru.

11/3287, Delhi Gate Bazar,
New Delhi — 110002.

Giani Ishar Singh Nara

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

When "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama" was first published in Punjabi in 1971, I found, on going through it, that it contained a fund of detailed and valuable information about the life, literary achievements, victories, travels and travails of Guru Gobind Singh during the short span of his life (1666-1708 A.D.). Obviously, it was the outcome of strenuous efforts made by the author, Giani Ishar Singh Nara, in collecting vast source materials and doing extensive research work by going from place to place personally. I felt attracted towards the book and read it over again, marking at the same time the numerous printing and other mistakes that needed rectification.

Simultaneously, I thought that such a book must be made available to non-Punjabi and English-knowing people, so as to remove several misunderstandings that have crept into their minds about Guru Gobind Singh and his relations with the hlll chieftains and the Mughal rulers. But I slept over the idea for a long time, thinking it to be too heavy a task for a retired person like me to undartake and hoping that some other youthful and energetic person would do the needful.

During this period, both the author and my close friend, Sardar Sohan Singh (former, Unesco Adult Literacy Expert), who had also read the book at my suggestion, kept on reminding and prompting me to give practical shape to the idea of translating the book into English. It was only in April, 1983 that I was able to divert my attention to this project. In the absence of any stenographic assistance, I had to write out the whole material in hand which kept me busy practically throughout that year. It was mostly a labour of love for me.

While translating, the original arrangement of the material has been kept up, except that repetitive and superfluous

phraseology has been omitted and scattered references to the same subject or event have been brought together so as to make it a running and connected narrative. As far as possible simple language has been used by avoiding literary embellishments and use of hyperboles.

The author has based his narratives mosty on "Suraj Prakash", written by Kavi Santokh Singh nearly one hundred years after the passing away of Guru Gobind Singh at Nanded. This was done by him on the authority of evidence recorded, through the pen of Bhai Sahib Singh, by Bhai Ram Kuar, who had remained with Guru Gobind Singh almost till the end at Nanded. As such, it has not been possible to ignore or omit *sakhis* or legends described therein altogether from the English translation. However, additional footnotes, marked "Tr." (Translator), have been added at certain places to explain some important points, keeping in view the opinions of modern research scholars also.

Without claiming any participation in the actual reasearch work involved in compiling this book, I would like to mention that all renderings of verses and quotations from old reference books into English are mine, exeept where indicated otherwise. For difficult meanings I had to consult "Shabdarath of Dasam Granth"(Punjabi University, Patiala), "Mahan Kosh" and other available annotations and reference books.

Glossary of technical words in common use and bibliography of books relied upon have been compiled and added to facilitate futher reference by the readers.

In the end, I must record my sincere thanks to my esteemed friend, Sardar Sohan Singh (former, Unesco Adult Literacy Expert) who kindly went through the whole of my manuscripts patiently, part by part, making several verbal improvements and giving other valuable suggestions.

I am also grateful to him for having agreed to write the Foreword of this book.

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FOREWORD

"Safar Nama and Zafar Nama" by Ishar Singh Nara is a full-length biography of Guru Gobind Singh in a traditional style. It gives the details of the Guru's life some of which, so far as I know, are not to be found in any published work in English or Punjabi or Urdu. The author has relied for such detailed material partly on Santokh Singh's "Suraj Prakash", while some other factual material, especially that bearing on the Guru's later journeys, has been collected by the author through his own painstaking research. The coverage of the book being what it is, I believe, it can serve as a source material for future writers who may wish to take up more than an elementary book on the life of the Guru.

The author has also examined at length some of the controversial aspects of the Guru's life. These range from the question of whether or not the Guru entered on the service of emperor Bahadur Shah to that of his "disappearance" after his death. In consonance with the spirit of the book, Nara has given his opinions on these questions as a devotee of the Guru. But he has raised the questions which any future writer of the Guru's life must take note of.

Sardar Joginder Singh, the translator of the original Punjabi work into English, has performed the translator's role with a conscience. He has subordinated his use of the English language to the need to give faithfully the author's facts and views. I know at first hand that sometimes he had to spend considerable time on the appropriatenes of a single word in the context of the original. At times he consulted his friends on the choice of a particular word, Whatever difficulties he had to face as a translator, he has

been able to impart a greater readability to his translation than was the case with the original Punjabi work.

I am confident that English readers, students and research scholars of Sikh history will find this work quite informative and useful.

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SOHAN SINGH
(Former Unesco Adult
Literacy Expert)

TRAVELOGUE FIRST

THE ADVENT

The Lord God has created innumerable universes. We consider our visible world to be the whole of creation but actually it is just an infinitesimal part of what He has created in the forms of continents, seas, skies and the underworlds. Guru Arjan Dev clearly hinted at this wonderous phenomenon in his Sukhmani (Ashtpadi X). And modern scientific research, made through rockets, telescopes and electronic devices have already laid and are continuously laying bare what had been intutionally described by the Gurus and saints centuries back. Such spiritual leaders have been appearing in different parts of the world and in different forms and under different names and were worshipped by the people as *avatars* and messengers of God.

When the ancient land of India was subjugated by the Mughals and its population was groaning under inhuman atrocities perpetrated on them, there was an unmistakable need for God's intervention to punish the tyrants and save the innocents. And for carrying out this enormous and difficult task, the Lord's choice fell on "Dusht Daman" (Destroyer of the Wicked) by which appellation Guru Gobind Singh was known in his previous life. At that time he was absorbed in deep contemplation in the dizzy heights of the Himalayas where *sapt-springs*, the seven snow-clad hill-peaks, embellish the scenic beauty. Unwilling to give up the bliss of meditation, he had to be prevailed upon by the divine Lord to take birth in India where the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, was inflicting untold miseries on the helpless people and where it was necessary to re-establish *dharma*, the primary rule of love, mercy and equality. Guru Gobind Singh has himself written in his autobiogra-

phy (Bachittar Natak) as under :—

"ਹਮ ਇਹ ਕਾਜ ਜਗਤ ਮੋ ਆਏ । ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵਿ ਪਠਾਏ ।
ਜਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਤੁਮ ਧਰਮ ਬਿਥਾਰੋ । ਦੁਸਟ ਦੋਖਯਨਿ ਪਕਰਿ ਪਛਾਰੋ । (੪੨)
ਯਾਹੀ ਕਾਜ ਧਰਾ ਹਮ ਜਨਮੰ । ਸਮਝ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਾਧੂ ਸਭ ਮਨਮੰ ।
ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ । ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੋ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਿਨ । (੪੩)

(I have come to the world under God's directions for the sake of *dharma*, to spread righteousness and chastise the wicked. Let the holy people understand this in their minds. My task is to re-establish righteousness and to uproot the tyrants).

BABA AT BAKALA

After the demise of the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind, in 1644 A.D., his youngest son, Tegh Bahadar, was staying in village Bakala, district Amritsar, along with his mother (Mata Nanki) and his wife (Mata Gujri). He remained there for nearly 21 years, deeply absorbed in meditation in an underground cellar and undisturbed by worldly happenings. Although born in Amritsar in 1621 A.D., he had to keep away from his ancestoral town of Kiratpur in the Shivalik Hills so as to avoid the animosities and evil designs of his Sodhi relatives on the paternal side and some of the ill-disposed missionaries. It was at Bakala that he had been proclaimed as the future (ninth) Guru after the passing away of Guru Harkishan in 1665 A.D. in Delhi. Soon thereafter, Guru Tegh Bahadur left Bakala and, after staying at Kiratpur for some time, shifted to Makhowal, where he purchased some land and started construction of a new township which later on came to be known as Anandpur (the City of Bliss). By that time, the news about the proclamation of Tegh Bahadur as the Guru had spread all over the land and thousands of devotees came to Anandpur to have his *darshan* and seek his blessings. His father, Guru Hargobind, had prophesied to his wife that her son, Tegh Bahadur, would ascend the guru's throne one day and that he would also be blessed in due course with a valiant son. While the first prophesy had materialised, the second was also bound to be realised. That was Guru Tegh Bahadur's conviction. So, in order to escape the envious eyes of the none-too-pleased relatives and also to revitalise and bless

the congregations set up by Guru Nanak during his *udasis* (missionary tours), he decided to undertake a pilgrimage towards the eastern provinces, along with his family and some leading Sikhs.

PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS THE EAST

Starting from Anandpur in 1665 A.D. he passed through villages Rahli, Kalaur, Dadu Majra, Agaoni, Harpalpur, Khatta-Kheri, Ugana, Naulakha, Tehalpura, Akkarh (6-7 miles from Patiala), Seenbhrho, Rohta, Gunike, Baurhahai, Rajo Majra, Mulowal, Sekha, Kattu, Farwahi, Hadiyala, Dhaula, Maur, Dhillon, Ali Shahr, Bhandre, Joga, Bhopal, Khiwa, Samao, Bhikhi Kasba, Gandh, Daleu-Khayala, Bhaini Bagheke, Ghumna, Saboke Maur, Dikh (Darbar Sahib), Dikh-Khana Mai and Tahla before reaching Sabo Ki Talwandi (Damdama Sahib), Here, touching the earth with his arrow, he prophesied that a great man will come and make the place his abode so as to rewrite the scripture and extend missionary activities.

From Damdama Sahib, the Guru proceeded to Tahla, Dhuram Kot, Ber Village, Bachoana, Gobindpura, Sangherhi, Gaga, Gurne, Lail, Munak, Makrorh, Dhamtan (where he gave a portion of his turban and a Hukam Nama to the devotees), Bahar Jakh, Kainthal, Barna, Thanesar, Jheur Herhi, Bani Badarpur, and after visiting several other places on the way, reached Kanpur where he stayed for a few days. From there he went to Allahabad and set up his residence in a clean, wide and airy house in Mohalla Ahiyapur, with the intention of living there upto Baisakhi of 1666 A.D. In Allahabad his daily routine was to visit the *tribeni sangam*, distribute charities and meditate on God's Name. It was there that his wife, Mata Gujri, conceived in a prayerful mood. Now the time had come for the second prophesy of his father to be fulfilled.

According to the verbal evidence of some famous *pandas* (priests) of Allahabad, the Guru's family stayed there for nearly three months. Then they all visited the historic cities of Banaras, Sasram, Gaya, Rajgiri etc. and reached Patna in May 1666 A.D. Leaving the family in Patna, Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Monghyr and from there

to Assam in the company of Raja Ram Singh, who had great faith in the Guru, as the latter's father, Guru Hargobind, had rescued several relatives of the Raja from their captivity in Gwalior fort. He, therefore, sought the Guru's assistance in his attempt to subjugate the Raja of Assam. Different historians have recorded different dates and reasons for the Guru's visit to Assam but that is immaterial. The fact remains the Guru did go to Assam as is evident from several historic places existing there in his memory.

BIRTH OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

It was during the absence of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Assam, that Guru Gobind Singh was born in Patna on Poh Sudi Saptmi, Samvat 1723 Bikrimi (December 22, 1666 A.D.). In Bachittar Natak, this event is referred to in the following words :—

ਮੁਰਪਿਤ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਕੀਯਸ ਪਯਾਨਾ । ਭਾਂਤਿ ਭਾਂਤਿ ਕੇ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨ੍ਹਾਨਾ ।
ਜਬ ਹੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਬੇਨੀ ਭਏ । ਪੁਨ ਦਾਨ ਦਿਨ ਕਰਤ ਬਿਤਏ ।
ਤਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਭਯੋ । ਪਟਨਾ ਸ਼ਹਰ ਬਿਖੈ ਭਵ ਲਯੋ ।

(When my parents proceeded towards the east, they visited various places of pilgrimage on the way. On reaching *tribeni* (Allahabad), they spent their time in distributing charities to the poor and the needy. It was during their stay at Patna that I was born).

The entire household and neighbourhood became a scene of rejoicing and sweets were distributed among all who came to offer congratulations. The maternal uncle of the child Guru, named Kirpal Chand, conveyed the happy news to Guru Tegh Bahadur in Assam in a respectful and congratulatory letter sent through a special messenger, with a request for his early return to Patna. It is said that, on receiving the news, Guru Tegh Bahadur went into an ecstasy and thanked the Almighty for fulfilling the second prophesy of his father. The following verse of the Adi Granth suddenly came to his mind :

"ਸਮੁੰਦੁ ਵਿਰੋਲਿ ਸਰੀਰ ਹਮ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਇਕ ਵਸਤੁ ਅਨੂਪ ਦਿਖਾਈ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਭਾਈ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 442)

(On churning the bodily ocean, I have seen a unique vision. The Guru who blesses the devotee with God's Name

is none other than God Himself; there is no difference between the two, sayeth Nanak).

He named the newborn child "Gobind Das" and wrote back a Hukam Nama, in the name of Patna *sangat*, blessing them and appreciating their services rendered to his family and the child. This and other Hukam Namas are preserved in Harmandir, Patna Sahib, and are reproduced in the compilation of Hukam Namas by Dr. Ganda Singh.

In Dhaka (now in Bangla Desh) also, Guru Tegh Bahadur, along with Raja Ram Singh, celebrated the occasion with great rejoicings. One Atam Das, an *udasi* saint (known earlier as Jiwan Das) enquired from the Guru the reason for such large scale celebrations in an alien province. The Guru prephesied that the child who had taken birth in his family was not an ordinary soul. He had been specially sent to the world by Almighty God and will prove to be a God-enlightened soul and a valiant destroyer of the tyrants. After 41 years, Guru Gobind Singh met and blessed this *udasi* saint at Burhanpur during his journey towards the Deccan.

PIR BHIKHAN SHAH'S DESIRE

Pir Bhikhan Shah was a revered sufi saint of district Karnal in the Punjab. During his early morning meditation, he saw a brilliant light spreading towards the east. He realised by intuition that a great soul had appeared in the city of Patna. Along with some of his followers, he proceeded in that direction and reached the place where the child Guru had taken birth. He expressed his desire to see the new-born child, but the Guru's mother and grandmother refused to fulfil his desire as they suspected him to be an imposter or someone's agent sent from the Punjab to harm the child. After two days of persistant requests from the saint, the ladies relented and, accompanied by Kirpal Chand, the maternal uncle, brought the child out in the open courtyard of the house, where he was laid on a special bed with velvet cover, with due reverence being shown by members of the family and the neighbours. The Pir was greatly impressed by the sanctified atmosphere of the place. He placed two covered bowls of sweets near the hands of the child in order to test his inclination towards the Hindus

and the Muslims. With a smile on his face, the child, who was three months old at the time, placed his hands on both the bowls which indicated that he treated both of them alike. The Pir cried out "Subhan Allah" in ecstasy and returned, along with his followers, fully satisfied about the child's spiritual greatness. It is recorded that when the Guru was seven years old he again met this saint at Lakhnaur on his way back from Patna.*

GURU TEGH BAHADUR IN CALCUTTA

After visiting Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Kahal Gaon, Kuntal Nagar, Nal Hatti, Makhsudabad, Malde, Rangpur, Maniari Ghat, Rani Ghat, Dhaka, Dhanpur, Balai Gaon, Mehmins, Gauhati, Gawal Parha, Dhubri Ghat in Assam and bringing about peace between Raja Ram Singh and Raja Pranpal Singh of Gauripur, Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Calcutta via Rangpur and Lakhmipura in district Purnea.

At that time Calcutta was not so much populated. Its Raja, Hajuri Singh, was a religious-minded person. He was impressed by the Guru's greatness and became his follower by donating Bara Bazar and Baghmari areas for the Guru's mission. Gurdwara Bari Sangat, together with Gurdwara Baghmari attached to it, is all that is now left of this donated estate. All religious congregations of the Calcutta Sikhs are now held in these gurdwaras. At the time of departing from Calcutta, the Guru gave a *pothi* (devotional book) and a dress by way of *saropa* (robe of honour) to Raja Hazuri Singh which is still preserved in a red box in fort Gobind Garh.

BACK IN PATNA

On reaching Patna, Guru Tegh Bahadur stayed outside the city in a garden belonging to Nawab Rahim Rhan and known as Nawab ka Bagh. The Nawab had heard about the Guru's greatness and he came to pay his respects to him. With the Guru's blessings the Nawab's Begum was cured of her physical ailments. In gratitude he donated the garden to the Guru, which is now called Guru Ka Bagh. There are a gurdwara and a big well in this garden.

* "Gurdham Sangrah" by Giani Gian Singh, pages 1881-89.

According to local belief, whoever bathes at that well and plants a tree in the garden, has his wishes fulfilled. It was there that the Guru called his family from the city and saw the newly-born child whom he named Gobind Rai. There was jubiliation at this happy re-union of the family and the birth of the successor Guru.

But the stay of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Patna was a short one. News started coming in about the atrocities being committed by emperor Aurangzeb and his governors on the helpless Hindus whose religious places were being desecrated and who were being forcibly converted to Islam. He decided to leave for the Punjab to give succour to the down-trodden and disheartened people. He left instructions with his family to come to the Punjab only after hearing from him.

On his way to the Punjab, the Guru stopped for short periods at Arah, Buxar, Dumgaon, Banaras, Mirzapur, Ayodhya etc. Then he visited Hardwar and Kankhal where he rested at the gurdwara built in memory of Guru Amar Das. From there he passed through Santal Sar Raj Ghat, Darazpur near Jagadhri, Chanana, Sodhal Tandewal and Lakhnaur and some other places on the way before reaching Anandpur.

TRAVELOGUE SECOND

FROM PATNA TO ANANDPUR

Gobind Rai remained in Patna upto the age of six years. A number of historic places like Takhat Harmandir Sahib (Janam Asthan), Maini Sangat, Gobind Ghat, Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh and Handi Wali Sangat in Patna are associated with his name. Raja Fateh Chand Maini had no issue. His Rani desired to have a child like Gobind Rai, who used to play near her residence, along with his other playmates. The child Guru fulfilled her desire by going and sitting in her lap and eating *puris* and boiled grams from her hands and making his playmates also partake of the same. This *prasad* is distributed till today at Gurdwara Maini Sangat which is located near Kali Asthan in Harmandir Gali.

At Gobind Ghat near Harmandir Sahib, the child Guru showed his pranks by throwing his golden bracelet into the Ganges. On being questioned by his mother as to where he had thrown it, Gobind Rai pointed out the place by throwing the other bracelet also, thus showing complete indifference to worldly wealth.

Handi Wali Sangat is located in Danapur, 16 miles north of Patna, near the river bank. It was there that Gobind Rai, along with members of his family, spent the first night of the journey to Anandpur, in the house of a devoted but poor lady, named Jamni, and ate *khichri** prepared by her in a *handi* (earthen pot). The lady, out of love for the child Guru, later on converted her house into a gurdwara, which is now known as Gurdwara Handi Wali Sangat and where *khichri** is still served as a *prasad***.

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* Rice, boiled with splitted pulse, generally considered to be a light food.

**Part of sanctified food offered for worship of a deity or guru, and later on distributed among the devotees.

Mention has already been made of Guru Ka Bagh where Guru Tegh Bahadur stayed on his way back from Assam and saw and blessed the new born child Guru for the first time.

On receiving instructions from Guru Tegh Bahadur the family completed the journey to Anandpur by convenient stages under the care and management of Kirpal Chand, the maternal uncle of Gobind Rai. All along the way, at every resting stage, thousands of devotees (old and new) came to see the child Guru and offered congratulations to Mata Gujri and other members of the family. After reaching Anandpur, special precautions had to be taken to protect the child from the hostilities of his Sodhi kinsmen who saw in Gobind Rai the virtual successor to *gur-gaddi* to the exclusion of all of them. Gur Tegh Bahadur deputed reliable teachers to teach Persian and Hindi to the child, who had already learnt Punjabi from his mother while at Patna. According to Bhai Santokh Singh and Bhai Vir Singh, it was Sved Inayat Ali Shah, Nurpuri who tought Persian and Munshi Sahib Chand who gave him instructions in Hindi and Gurbani, under the over-all supervision of Guru Tegh Bahadur himself, for nearly two years.

Meanwhile, the political situation in the country was worsening on account of the bigoted policy of emperor Aurangzeb. Some leading Kashmiri pandits had arrived at Anandpur to tell their tale of woe of and seek the help of Guru Tegh Bahadur. By now Gobind Rai was nine years old He saw his father's dilemma and, like a self-reliant and precocious child, requested his father to help the supplicating pandits even if it required sacrificing his own life in the cause of *dharma*. Guru Tegh Bahadur knew, by intuition, the future trend of events. He was aware of the qualities and attainments of his son, but before leaving for Delhi to lay down his life he desired to give some further advice to Gobind Rai. So he called him lovingly in his presence and apprised him of the historical background of Guru Nanak's mission, the important events relating to Sikh history, the relationship between the Guru and the Sikhs and the need for safeguarding the purity of married life even in the face of allurements.

Having done so and finding in Gobind Rai a capable successor, who could shoulder the responsibilities of the Guru's office in his absence, he annointed him as the succeeding Guru of the Sikhs and himself proceeded to Delhi, via Agra, to challenge the imperial orders for large-scale conversions to Islam and descecration of Hindu places of worship. It was on Nov. 20, 1675 A.D. that Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, under the explicit orders of emperor Aurangzeb, for his refusal to embrace Islam. We need not go into details of such a unique martyrdom in the history of the world, except saying that it was for the protection of *tilak* (forehead mark) and *janeu* (sacred thread) of the Hindus, in which the Guru himself did not believe but for which and for freedom of religious practice, that he preferred to sacrifice himself. Guru Gobind Singh has referred to this event in his autobiography (Bachittar Natak) in the following words :

"ਤਿਲਕ-ਜੰਞੂ ਰਾਖਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤਾਕਾ । ਕੀਨੋ ਬਡੋ ਕਲੂ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਕਾ ।
ਸਾਧਨ ਹੇਤਿ ਇਤੀ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰੀ । ਸੀਸ ਦੀਆ ਪਰੁ ਸੀ ਨ ਉਚਰੀ ।

(For the sake of protecting the forehead mark and sacred thread of the Hindus, he (Guru Tegh Bahadur) performed the greatest event of Kalyuga; he offered himself as a sacrifice without evincing any sign of pain).

As recorded by Sikh chroniclers a severe duststorm blew over Delhi soon after the Guru's martyrdom A Sikh, named Bhai Jiwan Ranghreta, taking advantage of this natural occurrence, picked up the Guru's severed head and, concealing it in a sheet of cloth, escaped to Anandpur. There it was received by Guru Gobind Singh and his family and cremated with due reverence at the place now known as Sis Ganj on the bank of the river Sutlej.

In Delhi, it was only after the duststorm was over that the authorities came to know that the martyred Guru's head had been stolen. So they tightened the watch over the dismembered body. But another devoted Sikh, named Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara, who used to trade in supplies required by the government, was successful, with the advice and help of Bhai Gurditta, in removing the body by stealthily concealing it in his loaded cart which passed through

Chandni Chowk in the early hours of the following morning. It being wintry season people were still asleep in their homes. He collected all his household effects, and placing the body thereon, set fire to the entire house so as to avoid detection by the authorities. And after lodging his family in another house offered by a neighbour he left for Anandpur to apprise the Guru's family of the tragic happenings in Delhi.

The whole of Anandpur was gripped in a wave of sorrow and mourning. Bhai Lakhi Shah, as unknown figure to the place, did not have the courage to explain to the assembled congregation the reason for his dripping tears. But his arrival from Delhi was full of ominous potent and all were eager to have detailed information from him about the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. On repeated inquiries from Guru Gobind Singh, who was comparatively more composed, Bhai Lakhi Shah could not contain himself any longer and burst out as under :—

"Maharaj, the Sikh, who had arrived earlier with the severed head of the Guru, must have conveyed to you as to what had happened and how he was able to pick up the Guru's head and bring it to Anandpur. The whole diabolic tragedy has been enacted under the Mughal emperor's instructions like this : Guru Ji was arrested in Agra and brought to Delhi under the strict guard of several hundred cavalary men. At first he was persuaded to give up his leadership and representative capacity of the Hindus, who were idol worshippers and infidels, whereas he believed in worship of one Formless and Omnipotent God. On his refusal to do so, he was imprisoned in a sharp-edged iron cage." This story was received in a burst of bewailing shricks from the audience. But the Guru consoled every one and asked Bhai Lakhi Shah to continue. He said, "For several days and nights Guru Ji was tortured and, when he refused to yield, one of his dear Sikhs who had accompanied him from Agra, Bhai Dayal Das, was boiled alive in hot water cauldron and his body was thrown before Guru Ji's eyes so as to overawe him. After one or two days' interval, another Sikh, Bhai Mati Das, was sawn alive in front of Guru Ji's cage. He was no doubt aggrieved at this torturous

treatment meted out to his Sikhs but he was also happy and thankful to the Almighty that his Sikhs had shown admirable courage by refusing conversion to Islam and, instead, accepting martyrdom. A few more days were allowed to lapse but when Guru Ji remained steadfast in his resolve, he was ordered to be executed under imperial *firman*." This caused extreme anguish and consternation in the minds of all those present.

Continuing his narration, Bhai Lakhi Shah said, "It was my misfortune to have witnessed the atrocities eommitted on the following day. In the afternoon Guru Ji was brought out of the cage and seated in front of the mosque in Chandni Chowk. He was finally given the usual offer of Islam or death. Guru Ji preferred the latter and his head was cut off by one stroke of the executioner's sword. It was announced as an imperial order that Guru Ji's body should be cut into four pieces and placed on the four walls of the city to serve as a warning to others.* It was also declared that if any one dared come near the dismembered body to touch or collect any of the pieces, he would also be dealt with similarly. Thus, out of fear, thousands of local Sikhs, who had assembled, did not wait to see what happened to the body and went away to their homes, filled with anguish and a feeling of frustration. Meanwhile, darkness descended on the city and the body remained lying uncut at the place of execution. In this situation a plan occurred to me. Some government officials knew me as a trader and supplier of provisions to the government store. I had some of my loaded bullock carts standing near the Red Fort. They were to pass through Chandni Chowk in the early hours of the morning I instructed one of the bullock cart drivers to pick up Guru Ji's body in thick darkness, conceal it among other goods loaded in the cart, and reach my house in the locality of Raisina by a shorter route. The rest of the carts followed the normal route in a long line. At day-break, when the guards found the body missing, they searched all around and went after the long line of carts but could not find the body anywhere. Meanwhile, the cart containing

* "Sadha Itehas" by Principal Satbir Singh, p. 312 (based on the evidence of Ghulam Hussain).

the body had reached my house and it was still dark when I collected all my household goods and, after making an improvised pyre, set fire to the entire house, along with the body, so as to avoid detection. This is how the pious body of Guru Ji was cremated".*

All glory to Bhai Lakhi Shah who acted, though symbolically, in accordance with Bhagat Kabir *Bani*, viz.

"ਕਬੀਰ ਐਸਾ ਕੋਈ ਨ ਜਨਮਿਓ ਅਪਨੇ ਘਰ ਲਾਵੈ ਆਗਿ ॥
ਪਾਂਚਉ ਲਰਿਕਾ ਜਾਰਿ ਕੈ ਰਹੈ ਰਾਮ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗਿ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 1366)

(Rarely is a person born who puts to flames his entire self by burning away his desires, anger, greed, attachment and ego and living in tune with the All-pervading Lord).

He had built his house to fulfil the needs of his family but he did not refrain from destroying it by fire lit with his own hands. He faced and overcame the anger which members of his family must have expressed on seeing the destruction of their house. He eschewed the greed which must have lurked in his mind at the dissolution of his economic prosperity built up with his life-long efforts. He did not care for the attachment to his family, nor did he entertain any egoistic feeling at having accomplished an astounding feat in the service of his Guru.

The blessings which Bhai Lakhi Shah received from Guru Gobind Singh were more valuable for him than all the sacrifices he had undergone.

REACTION AT ANANDPUR

It was natural that a sense of grief and anguish should prevail in Anandpur after hearing the details of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Guru Gobind Singh's maternal uncle, Kirpal Chand, was particularly anxious about the future. But the young Guru gave courage to all

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* This place is now known as Gurdwara Rakab Ganj and is situated near the Central Secretariat offices in Delhi. A beautiful mausoleum of white marble is built over the place of cremation. To commemorate the name of Bhai Lakhi Shah, a big hall, named "Bhai Lakhi Shah Hall" has now been constructed within its compound.

Sikhs and also consoled members of the family. He told them that Guru Nanak's principles of peace, devotion and protest against injustice had taken roots in the minds of the people. But the feeling of *shakti*, which his grandfather, Guru Hargobind, had introduced in them, had not yet borne fruit. The fact that no Sikh had the courage to come forward and pick up the dismembered body of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Chandni Chowk, Delhi was sufficient indication to show which way the future of the Sikh Movement lay. He assured them that he would create such Sikhs who would not be able to conceal themselves but fight with their tormentors openly and even offer supreme sacrifice for upholding the cause of *dharma* and righteousness. While such bold words infused courage in all, there was still some feeling of consternation in the household on account of possible reprisals from emperor Aurangzeb in case Guru Gobind Singh started raising an armed force to fight the Mughals. This had already happened once when, after Guru Arjan Dev's martyrdom, Guru Hargobind adopted a militant posture and he was treacherously imprisoned in Gwalior Fort by Aurangzeb's grandfather, emperor Jehangir. This anxiety was lurking in every one's mind.

EDUCATION AND MARRIAGE

Guru Gobind Singh was then only nine years old. In order to wean him away from militant leanings, his attention was diverted towards further education. Scholars were engaged to bring him up in Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi literature and ancient lore. Most of the standard works in those days used to be in poetry. So this gave him a good insight and experience in the art of writing poetical compositions. We will discuss his poetical and other literary achievements at a later stage. Suffice to say here that, as God-gifted youth, he mastered whatever was tought to him with speed and ability. The town of Anandpur started regaining its aura of peace, faith and courage.

At that stage, a Khatri from Lahore brought a proposal for marrying his daughter, named Jito Ji, with the Guru and the same was accepted by the elderly ladies of the house and uncle Kirpal Chand. After a few months the marriage

ceremony was also performed at a newly set up camp, called New Lahore, at a distance of a few miles from Anandpur. This was his first marriage.

Side by side, Guru Gobind Singh continued his military preparations. Recruitment of armed soldiers, organising hunting expeditions, laying foundations of some forts at short convenient distances for purposes of defence, arrow shooting competitions and mock battles were some of his regular activities during his initial stay at Anandpur.

CHANGES IN THE POLICY OF MUGHAL RULERS

History records that when Babur attacked India in 1521 A.D., there was severe fighting between the Mughals and the ruling Pathan chiefs at Eminabad in the Punjab. During the atrocities that followed there was indiscriminate destruction of men and materials and a large number of innocent people were taken prisoners and forced to work as labourers for Babur's armies. Guru Nanak was also imprisoned as a wandering mendicant and made to ply the hand-mill for grinding wheat in jail. But when Babur was apprised of the divine music emanating from Guru Nanak, he came to meet him in jail and, offering his regrets, ordered his release along with that of his co-prisoners. Finding him repentent, Guru Nanak blessed and advised him to administer justice if he wanted to rule over the country.

Babur then proceeded forward and captured Lahore. Thereafter, he defeated Ibrahim Lodhi in the battle at Panipat and became the sovereign ruler of Delhi. After Babur's death, his son, Humayun, ascended the imperial throne but he could not retain it for long and was defeated by Sher Shah Suri. He had heard about Guru Nanak's blessings from his father. So, while fleeing from Delhi, he came to Khadur to meet and seek help from Guru Nanak's successor, Guru Angad Dev. The latter, at the time, was out in the fields watching the wrestling matches of young boys. He remained indifferent at Humayun's arrival which annoyed the fleeing emperor. The latter showed his anger by trying to unsheathe his sword. Unperturbed, Guru Angad Dev taunted him for not showing his valour before Sher

Shah Suri but trying to do so in his presence. This greatly unnerved Humayun who begged to be excused and sought the Guru's blessing for regaining the throne of Delhi. Guru Angad Dev, in his magnanimity, advised him to try again. Humayun went to Persia and, after obtaining military aid from the rulers there, came back to defeat Sikandar Suri in the battle near Sirhind. He thus became the emperor of Delhi once again in 1555 A.D.

Akbar who succeeded Humayun was known for his policy of peace, tolerance and patronage of art and culture. His Din-i-Ilahi was an attempt to forge a reconciliation between Hinduism and Islam. Remembering the blessings his grandfather, Babur, had received from Guru Nanak, he went all the way to Goindwal to meet the elderly Guru Amar Das, the third in line of succession to Guru Nanak. He was very much pleased to see the *langar* (community kitchen) being run there and himself partook of the same like other commoners before having an audience with the Guru. The emperor offered an estate of 84 villages for the maintenance of the community kitchen but the Guru refused it on the plea that it was common men's institution and will be run by their voluntary contributions in kind and cash. The emperor then assigned the estate to Bibi Bhani, the Guru's daughter, as a part of the customary dowry for her marriage. It was on this estate that the succeeding Guru, Guru Ram Das, who also happened to be Guru Amar Das' son-in-law, built Chak Ram Das which later on become famous as the city of Amritsar.

After the death of Akbar, his son, Jehangir, ascended the imperial throne. He was a bigoted ruler who completely changed the peace-loving policy of Akbar. By now Guru Arjan Dev had assumed guruship as the fifth Nanak in which capacity he accomplished the tremendous tasks of compiling the holy scripture of the Sikhs (the Adi Granth) and completing the construction of the tank and the holy temple in its midst, Both these achievements, which consolidated the position and belief of the Sikhs, proved an eye-sore for Jehangir, who under incitement of both the *brahmins* and the *maulvis*, decided either to convert Guru Arjan Dev to Islam or to put him to death, so as to

exterminate the entire Sikh Movement once for all*. Consequently, on his refusal to accept Islam or pay a heavy fine in lieu of default, Guru Arjan Dev was tortured mercilessly by Nawab Murtaza Khan of Lahore and his collaborators under instructions from emperor Jehangir. The bigoted and hypocritical emperor, who swore by his sense of justice among the population, did not even spare Guru Arjan Dev's son, Guru Hargobind, who under pretence of friendship, was treacherously imprisoned in Gwalior fort. It was only after the intervention of the Muslim Sufi saint, Sain Mianmir of Lahore, and the emperor's own internal feeling of remorse, that he was released from the fort along with 52 other Hindu chieftains who were also imprisoned there and who had developed love and faith in Guru Hargobind during their common internment.

Shahjehan, who followed Jehangir, at first tried to be friendly with Guru Hargobind but later on changed his attitude. He levelled false charges against the Guru and attacked him four times. But on every occasion the Sikhs, under their Guru's command, defeated the imperial forces which remained subdued for some time.

When Aurangzeb came on the scene, he resorted to patricidal war by imprisoning his father, Shahjehan, and killing his own brothers. In order to please the bigoted *maulvis* he assumed the role of the destroyer of Hindu

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* The emperor has owned this in his memoirs "Tuzk-i-Jehangiri" in which he has written as under :—
"At Goindwal, on the bank of the river Beas, lived a Hindu, Arjan by name, in the garb of a Pir or Sheikh. Thus, many innocent Hindus and even foolish and ignorant Musalmans he brought into his fold who beat the drum noisily of his self-appointed prophethood. He was called Guru. From all sides, worshippers came to offer their homage to him and put full trust in his word. For three or four generations they had warmed up this shop. For a long time I had harboured the wish that I should set aside this shop of falsehood or I should bring him in the fold of Islam". (A History of the Sikh People by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 191).

idolators and also adopted a hostile attitude toward the Sikhs. He could not tolerate the idea of Guru Har Rai, who had followed Guru Hargobind as the seventh Nanak, keeping 2200 mounted soldiers with him. Through his courtiers he called Guru Har Rai to Delhi in order to test what spiritual powers he possessed. The Guru sent his eldest son, Ram Rai, to Delhi in order to satisfy the emperor. Both developed a feeling of comradeship between themselves, until one day Aurangzeb asked Ram Rai to explain the following lines occuring in Guru Nanak Bani known as "Asa di var" :—

"ਮਿਟੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਕੀ ਪੇੜੈ ਪਈ ਕੁਮਿਆਰ ॥
ਘੜਿ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਇਟਾਂ ਕੀਆ ਜਲਦੀ ਕਰੇ ਪੁਕਾਰ ॥"

(The earthly remains, the clay of a Muslim, came to be made into balls by a potter. From these balls he fashioned earthenware and bricks. As the clay was being baked in fire, it wailed)*. This was taken as a satire on the Muslim belief that their dead bodies remain buried under the earth until the day of judgement when they will rise to have their accounts settled. For fear of incurring the emperor's displeasure, Ram Rai changed the Gurbani by substituting the word "musalman" by the word "be-iman" i.e. the faithless. When Guru Har Rai came to know of his blasphemy, he decided to disown Har Rai and entrust guruship to his younger son, Harkishan, who was yet a child of 8 years. This decision was naturally resented by Ram Rai who incited Aurangzeb to intervene and declare him to be the rightful claimant of guruship after his father, Guru Har Rai. No better opportunity could have arisen for the Mughal emperor to arbitrate in the Sikh affairs, create disunity among them, and thereby consolidate his own imperial position**. Through the influence of Raja Jai Singh, Guru Harkishan was called to Delhi to stay at the place now called Bangla Sahib but, before the emperor could manage to meet the child Guru, the latter was struck by an attack

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* "The Ballad of God and Man" (Translation of "Asa di Var" by Sohan Singh, p. 49).

**"Guru Gobind Singh" by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 18.

of small-pox and he passed away in 1664 A.D. at the age of eight years, after giving the hint that the next Guru (Baba) will be found in village Bakala in district Amritsar. The hint was towards Guru Tegh Bahadur whose life events from his announcement as Guru upto his martyrdom have already been described earlier.

Aurangzeb had by now deputed some of his secret reporters in Anandpur to apprise him about the activities of Guru Gobind Singh from time to time. This is confirmed by the Muslim historian, Ghulam Mohiuddin who wrote :—

> "He (Guru Gobind Singh) has dispensed with all rites and customs of the Hindus. He has discarded their caste system and brought everyone on equal level without any distinction of high or low. Everyone is being made to eat and drink from the same bowl. Inspite of opposition from orthodox Hindus, nearly 20,000 men and women have come under his fold on the very first day of the creation of the Khalsa. He has vowed that he will make the sparrows fight the hawks and infuse such spirit in his Sikhs that each one of them will become bold enough to challenge one and a quarter lakh of the enemy."*

No wonder, if after becoming conscious of the militant activities of the young Guru, emperor Aurangzeb might have provoked some of the surrounding hill chieftains to beware and suppress the war-like preparations being made in Anandpur. In doing so he had the double satisfaction of estranging the Hindus from the increasing influence of the Sikh Guru, particularly after the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur for their cause, and at the same time keeping his hands free to subdue the Marathas in the South.**

THE POSITION IN ANANDPUR

Guru Gobind Singh, though still in his youth, was not unaware of the inimical postures of the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, and the hill chieftains. He had started collecting around him bands of dedicated Sikhs who were trained

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*"Guru Gobind Singh" by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 42.
**"Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 1).

in racing, horse riding, archery, shooting, hunting and mock fighting. Some of them were recruited as regular militiamen on payment of honorarium and free board and lodging. They were quite happy to be with their Guru in Anandpur where, apart from physical needs, their spiritual longings were also satisfied by joining in religious congregations during mornings and evenings. Thus, Anandpur had become a real abode of bliss. The Guru also used to regale the congregations by reciting exploits of ancestors like Lord Rama, Lord Krishna and Guru Hargobind.

A BEAR GIVES PERFORMANCE

One day, after the morning congregation was over, a man came leading a big bear by the nose. He wanted to give performance of his bear before the Guru and requested for his permission. On being so permitted he exhibited various feats of the bear, including his own fight with the animal. At that time, an attendant, named Bhai Kirtia, was waving a fly-whisk over the Guru's head. The Guru asked Bhai Kirtia if he had recognised the animal. He replied, "Sir, it is a bear" ! Thereupon the Guru told him that the bear was his father, Gurdas, who was undergoing the penalty for misconduct in his previous life. Kirtia was stunned. But he took courage and said, "But sir, my father had served your reverred father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, for a long time, with faith and devotion. If he has been rewarded with the life of a bear, then I will be destined to become only a monkey in my next life." The Guru explained the whole mystery to Bhai Kirtia in the following manner : "It is correct your father had served Guru Tegh Bahadur devotedly. But on one occasion, while he was distributing *karah prasad*, a passing Gursikh, with a cartload of goods on the move, begged for some *prasad* but your father refused. Instead, he reprimanded that Gursikh for making the request again and again and advancing towards him like a bear. That Sikh picked up a small particle of the *prasad* from the ground, uttered "Waheguru", and went away cursing your father that he was ignorant of the real splrit of Sikhism and would have to undergo the life of a bear. After a few days your father died and, on account of the

crseu of that Gursikh, was born again as the bear whom you are seeing before you."

On hearing this episode, the entire congregation felt pity for Bhai Kirtia's father and begged the Guru to somehow redeem him from that sort of life. The Guru asked the owner of the bear as to the price for which he would be willing to sell the animal. He agreed to part with it for Rs. 200 but, later on, resiled from that offer. Thereupon, the Sikhs, under instructions from the Guru, snatched away the animal, had pudding of Rs. 200 prepared and distributed freely among the congregation. The Guru gave part of his share of the *prasad* to the bear to eat. Thereupon, the animal fell dead on the ground and obtained salvation.

CANOPY WORTH TWO AND A HALF LAKH RUPEES PRESENTED

Bhai Duni Chand, a Sikh trader from Kabul, brought a beautifully embroidered and precious canopy, worth two and a half lakh rupees, as an offering to the Guru This greatly pleased the Sikhs as well as the Guru who had it exhibited under a specially set-up *shamiana*. The trader claimed that the embroidery work done on that canopy was far superior to the one executed on a similar canopy presented in the imperial court at Delhi. The Guru made arrangement for special singing of divine hymns and discourses to be conducted under that canopy and when he came to attend those programmes he looked like an exquisite figure of graceful personality and grandeur. Very often poetical symposia were held at the end of evening prayers under that canopy which also began to be displayed on special occasions like *gurpurbs* (holy days of Sikhs) and visits of Rajas and other dignatories.

During this period, a leading Sikh, Bhai Ram Saran of Lahore of Kumrav Khatri caste, brought his beautiful daughter, Sundri Ji, along with a rich dowry, and beseeched the Guru to accept her as his wife. The Sikh explained that it was his avowed desire for the past several years and he had been keeping his daughter as the Guru's trust all along with him. After some thought the Guru consulted his

mother as well as grandmother and, on receiving their consent, agreed to admit her in his household as his second consort. Bhai Santokh Singh has recorded* that the ladies of the hause and other relatives were very much pleased with the new arrival and they had regular marriage ceremonies performed with great jubliation.**

RAJA RATTAN RAI OF ASSAM

Raja Rattan Rai had been told by his mother that he was born with the blessings of Guru Tegh Bahadur and that a bald patch on his head was a sign of that blessing. The young Raja longed to see and pay his obeisance to the Guru, but his mother told him that the Guru was no more in the world and that in his place his young son, Gobind Rai, was the present Guru who lived in Anandpur in the Punjab. Rattan Rai became all the more eager for a meeting and accompanied by his mother and other attendants started for Anandpur. He brought with him one elephant, named 'Prasadi', five artistic arms of different manufacturing designs, ornaments, multi-coloured clothes and five horses. There was also, among the gifts, a mini-throne from which, on pressing a button, puppets would come out and start dancing before the audience. The Guru welcomed the royal guests with honour and had all their gifts displayed under the embroidered canopy mentioned earlier. The Raja was pleased with the whole environments, particularly the Guru's personality, and stayed in Anandpur for several months, learning Punjabi and understanding the meanings of Gurbani. At the time of leaving, the Guru gave several

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 1, Ansu 21).

**Some historians are of the view that Guru Gobind Singh had married only once and that Jito Ji and Sundri Ji were the parental and the in-laws' names of the same lady. But for historical reasons the author does not agree with this view. The fact of the second marriage in 1684 A.D. is established by writing on the slab put up in Gurdwara Mata Sundri in Delhi and the progeny of the Guru from two wives as will be explained later on. (Tr.)

valuable Punjabi artefacts to the Raja and his mother and bade them hearty farewell.

RANJIT NIGARA AND RAJA BHIM CHAND

The Guru realised the need of a war drum which could be used while going out on hunting expeditions. The missionaries and uncle Kirpal Chand were sceptical of its utility as they thought the beating of war drum will not only scare away the animals in the jungles but also annoy the hill chieftains. But the Guru said he was not afraid of any one as it was not his intention to attack or seize any one's territory. He was vehmently supported in his views by Sango Shah, the eldest son of the Guru Hargobind's daughter, Bibi Viro Ji, and his cousin. This silenced uncle Kirpal Chand, the missionaries and the ladies of the house. So the war drum, name "Ranjit Nigara", was prepared and set up in Anandpur with great enthusiasm and jubliation. Soon, with its loud beating, hunting parties, led by the Guru himself, would go out towards the mountaneous jungles. This naturally perturbed the nearby hill chieftan, Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur, who along with some of his courtiers, came to see the Guru on the following day with some gifts. He had also heard about the presentation to the Guru of the valuable canopy by a Sikh from Kabul and of the 'Prasadi' elephant, with beautiful white *tilak* on its forehead and streaks on its body, and other precious gifts by Raja Rattan Rai of Assam. The Guru had all those gifts displayed to Raja Bhim Chand who felt very jealous as he had not seen such valuable and unusual things with any of the hill chieftains or even at the imperial court in Delhi. He was also envious of the increasing grandeur and respect for the Guru in the minds of scholars and poets.

So, Raja Bhim Chand hatched a plan to divest the Guru of all these valuables. He sent his minister, Parma Nand, to the Guru, with the request that as his son was being married to the daughter of Raja Fateh Shah of Srinagar (Garhwal) he would be obliged if the Guru could lend all those valuable things, including the 'Prasadi' elephant, for a few days, to be exhibited at the marriage. The Guru sensed the Raja's intentions and expressed his inability to

comply with his request, saying that the presents offered were for decoration of the Guru's court and not for any other purpose. He, however, offered to send another elephant in place of 'Prasadi', if needed. But the Raja had different motives. He knew that the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, was also unhappy at the increasing strength of the Guru and he wanted to capitalise on it. On the other hand, the emperor was not willing, for the time being, to have direct confrontation with the Guru. He thought it expedient to prompt the hill chieftains, through the Subedars of Lahore and Sirhind, to fight with the Guru, thus using them as his tools. Raja Bhim Chand, however, remained silent for some time as the date of his son's marriage was still far off.

ARRIVAL OF RAJA MEDNI PRAKASH

During one of the hunting expeditions, the Guru went towards Kiratpur and Ghanaula where there were minor skirmishes between the Sikhs and the Pathan soldiers who had earlier deserted the Guru and joined the hill chieftains. Raja Medni Prakash of Nahan, who was a devotee of the Guru, came to see him and requested him to visit his State and be pleased to stay there for some time. By now the Guru understood the machiavellian policies of the Mughal rulers as well as of the wily hill chieftains. Thinking that it will be prudent to stay away from Anandpur for some time, he accepted the invitation of Raja Medni Prakash and decided to go to Nahan State and stay at Paonta on the bank of the river Jamuna. The Guru himself has referred to this decision as follows :—

"ਰਾਜ ਸਾਜ ਹਮ ਪਰ ਜਬ ਆਯੋ । ਜਥਾ ਸਕਤਿ ਤਬ ਧਰਮੁ ਚਲਾਯੋ ।
ਭਾਂਤਿ ਭਾਂਤਿ ਬਨਿ ਖੇਲਿ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰਾ । ਮਾਰੇ ਰੀਛ ਰੋਝ ਝੰਖਾਰਾ ।੧।
ਦੇਸ ਚਾਲ ਹਮ ਤੇ ਪੁਨਿ ਭਈ । ਸਹਰ ਪਾਂਵਟਾ ਕੀ ਸਧਿ ਲਈ ।
ਕਾਲਿੰਦੀ ਤਟਿ ਕਰੇ ਬਿਲਾਸਾ । ਅਨਿਕ ਭਾਂਤਿ ਕੇ ਪੇਖਿ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ ।੨।"*

(When the responsibility of guruship fell on my shoulders I conducted the the temporal and spiritual affairs to

* "Bachittar Natak" in Shabdarath Dasam Granth (Vol. I), published by Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 77.

the best of my ability. Hunting expeditions were led in different jungles and a variety of ferocious animals were killed in those expeditions. Then I shifted my abode from Anandpur to Paonta* which is situated on the bank of the river Jamuna where I witnessed varieties of spectacles and episodes.)

* This was in the months of September-October in 1686 A.D.

TRAVELOGUE THIRD

FROM ANANDPUR TO PAONTA

Travelling via Ghanaula, Kotla (near Ropar), Nabha Pind, Dhakauli, Nada-Toda, Manak Tabra, Toka Barwal and Rani Ke Raipur, Guru Gobind Singh, along with his family and entourage, reached Nahan in 1685 A.D. At that time he was 19 years and nearly three months old. At first he stayed in Raja Medni Prakash's palace, where he was received with great respect, love and hospitality. Pleased with his devotion, the Guru gifted the Raja with a sword, which is still available and on which the date of "17 Baisakh, Samvat 1742" is inscribed. From there he shifted to Paonta on the bank of the Jamuna which appealed to his artistic sense and love of the beautiful. The poets and scholars, who accompanied the entourage, were also greatly impressed by the scenic beauty of the place. A separate raised ground near the river bank was levelled up where every evening the Sikhs would gather and hear the poets recite their compositions and the scholars narrate specimens of their new writings and translations. Occasionally, they would also indulge in poetical appreciations of the Guru's personality and valour. Soon, more and more poets started assembling around the Guru until their number reached 52. It was customary in those days to render all scholistic compositions in the form of poetry.

It was in Paonta that the Guru himself also found time to write some of his longer poetical compositions like Krishnavtar. This he did in the year 1687 A.D. In the following year i.e. 1688 A.D. he completed the whole of Dasam Skandh of Krishnachritar which contains his following famous verse in the metre called Swayyas :

"ਧੰਨ ਜੀਉ ਤਿਹ ਕੋ ਜੱਗ ਮੈਂ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿੱਤ ਮੈਂ ਜੁੱਧੁ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ।
ਦੇਹ ਅਨਿੱਤ ਨ ਨਿੱਤ ਰਹੈ ਜੱਸ ਨਾਵ ਚੜ੍ਹੈ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰ ਤਾਰੈ।
ਧੀਰਜ ਧਾਮ ਬਨਾਇ ਇਹੈ ਤਨ ਬੁਧਿ ਸੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਜਿਉ ਉਜੀਆਰੈ।
ਗਿਆਨਹਿ ਕੀ ਬੰਢਨੀ ਮਨਹੁ ਹਾਥ ਲੈ ਕਾਤਰਤਾ ਕੁਤਵਾਰ ਬੁਹਾਰੈ।"

(Blessed is he whose mouth utters the Name of God and whose mind longs to take part in holy war. This body is transient and glorification of God enables it to cross the world's ocean. Let this body, therefore, become the abode of patience, lit up with the light of intelligence, and let cowardice be swept out of it with broom of knowledge).

In fact all the available compositions of Guru Gobind Singh written during the earlier period of his life, like Bachittar Natak, Ram Katha Bhagwat, Krishna Charitar, Chaupai Benti, Charittar Pakhyan, Sarb Loh Granth etc. were composed in Paonta, Anandpur or Bibhor. Other compositions, translations etc., done by the attending poets, were either washed away in the river Sirsa at the time of leaving Anandpur or destroyed by the Mughal armies during the course of their rampage there. Whatever was left or could be collected from duplicate copies available with the Sikhs were compiled later on by Bhai Mani Singh in the shape of Dasam Granth, the book named after the Tenth Master.

SOME SPECIMENS OF THE GURU'S VERSATILE POETRY

Let us here have a passing look at the versatile poetry of Guru Gobind Singh in different languages. It may at the same time be made clear that the Guru has varyingly used the pen-names of 'Shyam', 'Ram', 'Shah Gobind', 'Gobind Das' in his compositions according to the metre in which they fitted. Other poets like Ghalib, Zafar and Goya have also adopted multiple pen-names. This should not, therefore, create any confusion in the minds of the readers of Dasam Granth. According to the author, 'Shyam' and 'Ram' were the pet names with which Mata Gujri Ji used to call the Guru as a child. This also avoided the mention of the word 'Gobind' occuring in the name of her father-in-law, Guru Hargobind, according to the custom prevalent among Indian women.

Specimens

(1) "ਅਬ ਉਚਰੌਂ ਚੌਬੀਸ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ । ਜਿਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਲਖਾ ਅਖਾਰਾ ।
ਸੁਣਿਯਹੁ ਸੰਤ ਸਬੈ ਚਿੱਤ ਲਾਈ । ਬਰਨਿਤ 'ਸਯਾਮ' ਜਥਾ ਮਤਿ ਭਾਈ ।"
(ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

(Now I narrate the story of Chaubis Avatars (the twenty four Avtars of Vishnu) and how they played their parts on the world's stage ; let all holy men listen to it attentively what 'Shyam' is saying as best as he can—Dasam Granth).

(2) "ਸਦਾ ਦਾਹਿਨੇ ਦਾਸ ਕਉ ਦਾਨ ਦੀਜੈ ।
ਗੁਰੂ 'ਸ਼ਾਹ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ' ਕੀ ਰਛ ਲੀਜੈ ।" (ਖ਼ਾਸ ਬੀੜ)

(Bestow thy blessings on me, O Lord, and protect 'Shah Gobind'—Khas Bir).

(3) " 'ਸ਼ਾਹ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ' ਫਤਹਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਚਿ ਮੰਤ੍ ਅਖੈ ।"
(ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

(Victory is of God, says 'Shah Gobind' who utters the holy *mantra* of "Waheguru" from his lips—Sarab Loh Granth).

(4) "ਬਾਂਹੇ ਗਹੇ ਕੀ ਲਾਜ ਅੱਸ਼ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਦਾਸ ਤੁਹਾਰ ।"
(ਰਾਮਾਇਨ, ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

(He who has held my arm shall now protect the honour of 'Gobind Das', the servant of the Lord—Ramayan, Dasam Granth).

(5) "ਯੁੱਧ ਕਿਯੋ ਯਦੁ ਬੀਰਨ ਸੋਂ ਉਰ ਬੀਰ ਜਬੈ ਕਰ ਮੈਂ ਅਸਿ ਸਾਜਯੋ ।
ਮਾਰ ਚਮੂੰ ਸੁਬਿਦਾਰ ਦਈ ਕਵਿ 'ਰਾਮ' ਕਹੈ ਬੱਲ ਸੋ ਨ੍ਰਿਪ ਗਾਜਯੋ ।"
(ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਅਵਿਤਾਰ)

(When the Yadavs held swords in their hands to fight, they killed and destroyed the opposing army. Poet 'Ram' says that the king shouted furiously—Krishnavatar).

Another Specimen

"ਮੇਰ ਕਰੋ ਤ੍ਰਿਣ ਤੇ ਮੁਹਿ ਜਾਇ ਗਰੀਬ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਨ ਦੂਸਰ ਤੋ ਸੋ ।
ਭੂਲ ਛਿਮੋ ਹਮਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਆਪਨ ਭੂਲਨਹਾਰ ਕਹੂੰ ਕੋਊ ਮੋ ਸੋ ।
ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਗਿਹ ਦੇਖੀਅਤ ਦਬ ਭਰੋਸੋ ।
ਯਾ ਕਾਲ ਮੈ ਸਭ ਕਾਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਕੇ ਭਾਰੀ ਭੁਜਾਨ ਕੋ ਭਾਰੀ ਭਰੋਸੋ ।"
(ਬਚਿਤ੍ ਨਾਟਕ)

(Be kind on this worthless straw, my Lord, for no one is so merciful as thou are. Ignore my shortcomings for no one

is a greater defaulter than me. In thy service lie all the riches and comforts of home. Those who take shelter under the Lord of All Steel can always be sure of thy valiant protection—Bachittar Natak).

No wonder if the fame of Guru Gobind Singh as a poet, par excellence, who composed unmatched poetry in short as well as long metres and in almost all *Rasas* (Bir Ras, Shingar Ras, Nam Ras etc.), spread far and wide. Many poets, who felt dissatisfied with and were afraid of the bigoted religious policy of the Mughal emperor, came to reside with the Guru and flourish in his presence and under his patronage. 'Kuvresh' was one such poet who expressed his views in the following lines :

ਸੁਨਾ ਨਿਬਾਵਨ ਕੋ ਤੁਮ ਥਾਨ । ਸਦਾ ਨਿਮਾਨਨ ਕੋ ਵਡ ਮਾਨ ।
ਅਹੋ ਨਿਤਾਵਣ ਕੋ ਤੁਮ ਤਾਨ । ਅਸ ਸੋਭਾ ਕੋ ਕਥੈ ਜਹਾਨ ।
ਤੁਰਕ ਤੇਜ ਤੇ ਬਿਨ ਬਲ ਹਿੰਦੂ । ਧਰਮ ਬਿਨਾਸਤ ਮੇਲ ਬ੍ਰਿੰਦੂ ।
ਮਹਾਂ ਤ੍ਰਾਸ ਤੇ ਮੈ ਚਲ ਆਯੋ । ਚਹਿਤ ਆਪਨੋ ਧਰਮ ਬਚਾਯੋ ।

(I had heard O Guru, that thou are home for the homeless, respect for the discarded, strength for the powerless and thy fame has spread all over the world. The downtrodden Hindus are afraid of their religion and culture being destroyed by the Turks. It is out of such fear and in order to save my faith that I have left the imperial camp and come to seek thy protection).

It is said that once the Guru had gone out for a walk along the river bank in the company of some poets. He had a small bamboo stick in his hand at that time. One of the poets, Sarda, saw in that stick a resemblence of Krishna's flute and, deeply inspired, recited the following verse in the metre called Kabit :—

ਕੁੰਜ ਕੁੰਜ ਗਲਿਨਿ ਬਜਾਈ ਬਨ ਬਾਂਸਰੀ ਸੀ
ਉਨ ਹੀ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਸਈ 'ਸਾਰਦਾ' ਸਹਿਤ ਹੈ ।
ਜਮਨਾ ਕੇ ਤੱਟ ਬੰਸੀ ਬੱਟ ਕੇ ਨਿਕਟ ਸੋਈ
ਤੱਟ ਸਤ੍ਰਦੱਵ ਆਨ ਸਾਹਿਬੀ ਕਰਤ ਹੈ ।
ਦੇਖੇ ਭੂਪ ਭੂਪਨ ਕੇ ਭੂਮਿ ਕੇ ਭਗਤ ਲੋਗੋ
ਭਾਗ ਯਾਂ ਛਰੀ ਕੇ ਮੋ ਸੋਂ ਕਹਿਬੇ ਹੀ ਬਨਤ ਹੈ ।

ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਹੈ ਅਵਤਰਯੋ ਤੋ ਮੁਖ ਹੀ ਰਹਤ ਲਾਗੀ
ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਹੈ ਅਵਤਰਯੋ ਤੋ ਹਾਥ ਹੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੈ ।

(Just as once the flute played on the lips of Krishna in the narrow lanes of Mathura on the bank of the river Jamuna, so is this stick adorning the hand of (Guru) Gobind Singh on the bank of the same river. Its beauty is beyond description. Both the flute and the stick have a latent resemblence. When Krishna came as an Avtar, it remained glued to his mouth; now when he has assumed the form of (Guru) Gobind Singh it remains prominently in his hand).

PIR BUDDHU SHAH OF SADHAURA

Pir Badar Din (Buddhu Shah) of Sadhaura, which lies on the way to Paonta, heard about the qualities of the youthful Guru and, being a saintly person with peaceful inclinations, he came to Paonta to pay his homage to the Guru. He put several questions to the Guru on the subject of spirituality and, on receiving appropriate answers, felt greatly satisfied and impressed with the personality and spiritual attainments of the Guru. At the time of leaving, the Guru presented many gifts to him.

Soon, nearly 500 of his Pathan followers were dismissed from Dhamla cantonment, in district Karnal, by the Mughal army under orders from Aurangzeb, due to some act of indiscipline on their part. Under the leadership of Bhikhan Khan, Kale Khan, Najabat Khan and Hayat Khan they came to Pir Buddhu Shah with the request to have them employed in Guru Gobind Singh's militia. On being approached, the Guru was generous enough to employ all of them on salary of Rupee one for each horseman and Rupees five for each Sardar (leader) per day. Pir Buddhu Shah felt greatly honoured.

MEETING WITH RAM RAI

As mentioned earlier, Ram Rai, the eldest son of the seventh Guru, Har Rai, had displeased his father on account of his apostacy in altering a word in the composition of the first Guru, before Aurangzeb, just to win the latter's favour. Unable to stay in Delhi or Kiratpur he had shifted

his headquarters to Dehra Dun where the emperor had got him built a beautiful bungalow. He had lost gurushíp but retained the powers of enacting miracles. Through his agents he carried on the missionary work in hilly areas and gained many followers whose wishes he was able to fulfil.

Ram Rai had four wives, the eldest being Raj Kaur. She too possessed some miraculous powers but, being of religious nature, left Dehra Dun to settle down in Manu Majra, in district Ambala, where her *samadh* still exists and is respected by the village folks.

Ram Rai had been in Dehra Dun for 20-21 years and had by then become quite old. He had an inner longing to somehow meet Guru Gobind Singh (his uncle in relationship) alone and pour out his mind before him. He managed to have this meeting in a boat on the river Jamuna where the aides from both sides were kept at a distance. The Guru was then 22 years old but Ram Rai, who had seen him for the first time, was greatly impressed with his magnetic personality, spiritual attainments and cultured demeanour. During the talks he expressed regrets for his past faults and shortcomings and felt in his heart of hearts that the claim for guruship depended more on ability and grace than on seniority or lineage. The followers who had come with Ram Rai were watching this meeting from the river bank. They did not like the obeisance paid by the elderly Ram Rai to the young Guru Gobind Singh but they were helpless. At the time of departing, Ram Rai requested the Guru to forget the past and look after his organisational and household affairs so that his missionaries might not create any trouble after his death. The Guru assured that he would do so and both took leave of each other.

On his return to Dehra Dun, Ram Rai generally spent his time in meditation. He was a changed person altogether. He called his next senior wife, Punjab Kaur, and told her not to disturb him in his meditation for seven days. The missionaries, thinking that his end was approaching, wanted to finish him quickly so as to distribute among themselves the vast estate which Aurangzeb had granted to him. Punjab Kaur knew their minds but they would not listen to

her pleadings. They burnt Ram Rai alive while he was still in meditation. When Punjab Kaur conveyed this news to Guru Gobind Singh in Paonta the latter felt greatly upset. He hurried to Dehra Dun, collected all the notorious missionaries responsible for the atrocity in a room and set all of them aflame in order to teach them a lesson.

VISIT TO KAPAL MOCHAN

Kapal Mochan is a famous historical place of Hindu pilgrimage, near Kurukshetra. According to a mythological story, Shiva had with his 'Trisul' cut off the fifth head of Brahma for having cast a lustful eye on Saraswati. But that dismembered head had struck to the hand of Shiva. It was cast off only after Shiva had a dip in the holy tank at Kapal Mochan, which literally means separation of head (from the hand). A big fair is held there every year on the occasion of the full moon, Guru Nanak's birthday.

After chastising the missionaries in Dehra Dun, Guru Gobind Singh came to Kapal Mochan, via Jagadhri. He met a large number of Sikhs who had gathered there on the full moon fair and apprised them of his programme of meeting the challenge of Mughal rulers. They had come to know of the Guru's visit and had brought with them gifts in cash, arms and materials. They were all presented with robes of honour by the Guru.

BACK IN PAONTA

With the return of Guru Gobind Singh to Paonta, the life in that hilly town again became gay and eventful. Surroundedd on all sides by green forest-clad hills and flanked on one side by the river Jamuna, the town which was sanctified from the time when the Guru placed his 'paon' (feet) on its soil, became the place of pilgrimage for the Sikh devotees. Mock fights, military parades, hunting expeditions, archery competitions, wrestling matches, literary discussions, poetic symposia and *kirtan darbars* became regular features of the place. This was bound to raise a feeling of jealously in the minds of the surrounding hill chieftains who could not understand why the followers of Guru Nanak, who was peaceful, were now arming them-

selves. They were, therefore, becoming afraid of military preparations being made in the Guru's camp.

In those days, a group of 500 *udasis**, under the leadership of Mahant Kirpal Das, came to Paonta. They were conversant with gurbani and Sikh history and had played a useful role as missionaries. The Guru entertained them, alloted them suitable accommodation for stay and provided them provisions for preparation of their own meals in the puritan fashion as desired by them. They would hold their religious discussions during the mornings and evenings. Thus Paonta became popular as the centre of spiritual, literary and martial activities.

Raja Bhim Chand Kahluria was becoming inimical towards the Guru. He wanted him to live in his territory as his vassal and pay tribute to him. He could not tolerate the growing popularity and strength of the Guru. He thought that all the pomp and show at Paonta was meant to overawe the hill chieftains. So he was conspiring with them to wage war against the Guru and subdue the latter before he became too strong.

DEALINGS WITH RAJA FATEH SHAH

Time had now approached for the marriage of Raja Bhim Chand's son with the daughter of Raja Fateh Shah of Srinagar (Garhwal). The former again requested the Guru to lend the embroidered Kabli canopy and 'Prasadi' elephant for the marriage party. The Guru, knowing the Raja's intentions, again sent a reply in the negative. The marriage party had to pass from near the hill touching Paonta. He was afraid lest the Guru's soldiers might attack them while passing along that route. So he thought it safer to obtain the Guru's prior consent. The Guru agreed to the passing of the bridegroom and his few companions along the proposed route but advised the rest of the marriage party to go via a comparatively longer route. This annoyed Raja Bhim Chand all the more.

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* A sect of recluses, collateral with Sikhism and owning their origin from Baba Sri Chand, the eldest son of Guru Nanak.

On the other hand, Raja Fateh Shah of Srinagar (Garhwal) had become the Guru's devotee. He desired the Guru to join the marriage celebrations of his daughter. He sent some of his ministers with valuable gifts to the Guru for making this request. The Guru, in his wisdom and far-sightedness, did not go himself but sent his Dewan, Nand Chand, and *purohit*, Daya Ram, to attend the marriage and give presents worth Rupees one and a quarter lakh to the bride on behalf of the Guru. A posse of 500 horsemen also accompanied the party for the sake of protection of the valuables being carried. Raja Bhim Chand could not tolerate the growing friendship between Raja Fateh Shah and Guru Gobind Singh. He threatened the former with annulling the proposed marriage unless he returned the presents sent by the Guru and broke his friendly relations with the latter. Raja Fateh Shah had to yield and he agreed to join Raja Bhim Chand in waging war against the Guru. Consequently, the representatives sent by the Guru returned to Paonta without their presents being accepted. On the way a horse trader was found bringing a number of horses of superior breed for sale to the Guru. This also was an eyesore for Raja Bhim Chand. All the hill chieftains conspired together and attacked the Guru's returning party and the horse trader with the intention of looting and killing them. The Guru's horsemen, sensing the danger, took up positions in time and fought bravely with the soldiers of the treacherous hill chieftains. On reaching Paonta safely, Dewan Nand Chand explained to the Guru what had happened and how they were able to escape. The Guru knew that the combined strength of the hill chieftains will now attack him and ordered his Sikhs to make advance preparations and be ready for the fight. The Guru himself was filled with martial spirit and he decided to retaliate forcefully as and when the hill chieftains attacked him.

BATTLE OF BHANGANI

It was October 1686 A.D. According to the plan forged at Srinagar itself, the hill chieftains collected a force of 30,000 men and, under the leadership of Raja Bhim Chand and Raja Fateh Shah, marched towards Paonta. The Guru's

army consisted of nearly 4000 Sikhs only, besides a number of *udasis* and Pathans. Except for Mahant Kirpal Das and a few others, most of the *udasi* sadhus left the Guru's camp out of fear. The Pathans who had taken employment under the Guru on the recommendations of Pir Buddhu Shah were virtually purchased over by the hill chieftains. They had promised them that they would have them reinstated in the imperial army and that they would be free to have as much share as they liked out of the loot at Paonta after vanquishing the Guru's puny force. The Guru informed the Pir about the unfaithful behaviour of the Pathans and himself led his Sikhs to a place six miles north of Paonta, called Bhangani, (near Giri rivulet) where he set up his camp in anticipation of the attack.

On hearing about the behaviour of the unreliable Pathan mercenaries, Pir Buddhu Shah felt greatly perturbed. He immediately called his two sons and, along with nearly 700 of his Muslim followers, rushed to the Guru's help. They reached when the battle of Bhangani had already started and, therefore, they went straight into the fight. Mahant Kirpal Das, using his thick and heavy '*kutka*' (stick), was crushing the heads of enemy soldiers. He also chopped off the head of Hayat Khan Pathan who was fighting on the side of the hill chieftains. Pir Buddhu Shah's sons and followers also performed wonderful feats in this dreadful battle which Guru Gobind Singh has described in martial verses in his autobiography, Bachittar Natak. It is recorded that, besides several hundred Sikhs, the two sons of Pir Buddhu Shah and a large number of his Muslim followers died fighting at Bhangani. The Guru's general, Sangho Shah, after killing the brave Najabat Khan of the enemy side, himself fell in this battle. So did his brother Jit Mal. Both of them had by their feats of bravery revived the glory of their maternal grandfather, Guru Hargobind. Najabat Khan's death unnerved Raja Hari Chand. He shot a volley of arrows at the Guru in anger. One arrow hit the Guru's horse, the second touched his ear and the third struck at his waistband. Now it was the Guru's turn to hit back. His arrows spelled havoc in all directions, killing numerous enemy soldiers, including Raja Hari Chand. With the latter's fall,

the enemy lost courage and, before darkness spread, they left the battle field, completely vanquished. There are two famous verses of the Guru, referring to his moods in this battle :—

"ਜਬੈ ਬਾਣ ਲਾਗਯੋ, ਤਬੈ ਰੋਸ ਜਾਗਯੋ ।
ਕਰੰ ਲੈ ਕਮਾਣੰ, ਹਨੰ ਬਾਣ ਤਾਣੰ ।" (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

(When the enemy's arrows stuck me my wrath was aroused. Taking my bow in hand, I stretched it to the fullest extent to deliver a volley of my dreadful a rrows–Bachittar Natak).

Again, when the ene my was defeated, he thanked God in the following words :—

"ਭਈ ਜੀਤ ਮੇਰੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਾਲ ਕੇਰੀ ।" (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

(Although victory is mine, it is, O God ! due to Your kindness and grace). These very words are inscribed in the Gurdwara at Bhangani as a token of the Guru's thanks-giving and humility.

AFTER THE BATTLE

After attending to the dead and the injured, the Guru returned to Paonta and distributed gifts and rewards to his brave soldiers. Then he invited Pir Buddhu Shah and consoled him for the loss of his two sons and numerous followers. With a choked voice, the Pir said, "O, protector of Allah's humanity, I am not sorry for the loss of my sons and followers. On the other hand, I am happy that the ignominy earned by the unfaithful Pathan soldiers has been washed away by the blood of my sons and faithful followers. I am now able to present myself and my other two living sons before you without any remorse. The Guru appreciated his feelings and thought of giving him some permanent reward, besides his blessings. He spoke to the Pir in the following words, "Pir Ji, I am very much pleased with your words of sympathy and acts of sacrifice. Whatever is given in return will be too little. If too much money is awarded, it will last only for a few years. You are a faithful Muslim and have sacrificed your children for my cause. I want to give you something from which your progeny will reap benifits for generations". At that time the Guru was combing his hair and getting ready to tie the turban. He

offered to the Pir his comb along with the instuck hair, a sword and Rupees five thousands in cash He also told him to preserve those articles in his family because, after the fall of Mughal empire (which he said was certain) and when the Sikhs spread their kingdom, they will come to your family for venerating those articles and making their offerings. Then you and your family will realise the value of the articles presented to you. The Pir was filled with gratitude and he felt happy to receive the holy hair of Guru Nanak's successor which inspired him with the same feeling of reverance as the hair of Prophet Mohammad, now preserved in Srinagar (Kashmir)*.

BIRTH OF SAHIBZADA AJIT SINGH

After the battle of Bhangani the Guru stayed in Paonta for some time. In that very year, the first and the eldest son of Guru Gobind Singh was born in Paonta to Mata Sundri Ji. In memory of the victory at Bhangani, he was named Ajit Singh. According to some authors, the place of birth of Sahibzada Ajit Singh is mentioned as Anandpur. But this is not borne out by historical facts and chronological considerations. Thus the Guru's stay in Paonta, though short, is a significant event in his life inasmuch as it was important from literary, physical, military and domestic points of view. It can be termed as a glorious period of his life.

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* Commenting on Ritu 2, Ansu 32 of "Suraj Prakash", Bhai Vir Singh has written that on reaching his home in Sadhaura, Pir Buddhu Shah kept all the gifts in a small box which was concealed in a wall. After several years the ruler of Sadhaura, Usman Khan, started torturing Pir Buddhu Shah for the help given by him to Guru Gobind Singh against the hill chieftains who were considered as allies of the Mughal rulers. Later on, Banda Singh Bahadur avenged the treatment meted out to Pir Buddhu Shah by killing Usman Khan. When the Sikh Raj was established the box was taken out of the dilapidated wall, shown to Sikh Sardars and venerated thereafter as a precious possession of the Pir's family.

TRAVELOGUE FOURTH

RETURN TO ANANDPUR

From Paonta, Guru Gobind Singh returned to Anandpur in November, 1688 A.D. Sikhs in large numbers were waiting there to offer congratulations on the victory over hill chieftains and the birth of Sahibzada Ajit Singh. On the way, the Raja of Nahan, who was his devotee, detained him in village Toka for twelve days. There is a gurdwara in that village in memory of the Guru's visit. From there he went and stayed at Rani Ke Raipur (now in district Ambala) where he gifted a sword and a shield to the Raja. These gifts are still preserved in his family. Then passing through Khizrabad and one or two other places he reached Anandpur amid great jubiliation. His return is described beautifully by Bhai Santokh Singh in the following lines :–

ਜੈਸੇ ਸਿਯਾਮ ਘਨ ਲਰਿ ਮਥਰਾ ਮਹਿ ਸ਼ੱਤਰੂ ਹਨ,
ਪਾਏ ਬਿਜੈ ਲਛਮੀ ਬਸਾਈ ਜਾਈ ਦਵਾਰਕਾ ।
ਜੈਸੇ ਰਾਮ ਚੰਦ੍ ਧਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਕ੍ਰਮ ਬਿਲੰਦ,
ਲੰਕ ਰਾਵਨ ਨਿਕੰਦ ਕਰਿ ਔਧ ਕੀ ਸੰਭਾਰਕਾ ।
ਜੈਸੇ ਪਰਹੂਤ ਹੱਤ ਦੈਂਤਨ ਕੇ ਪੂਤ ਗਨ,
ਬਹੁਰੋਂ ਬਸਾਏ ਦੇਵ ਲੋਕ ਸੁਖ ਕਾਰਕਾ ।
ਤੈਸੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਾਂਵਟਾ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ ਜੰਗ,
ਆਨ ਕੇ ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਬਾਸ ਦੇਸ ਚਾਰਕਾ ।*

(Just as Krishna, after defeating his enemies in Mathura, went and established the town of Dawarka; just as Ram Chander, after subduing Ravana in Lanka, celebrated his victory in Ayudhia; just as gods, after killing the demons and their sons, rehabilitated Dev Lok; similarly, Guru Gobind Singh, after winning the battle of Paonta, returned, along with his family, to his abode in Anandpur amidst scenes of joy and happiness).

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 11).

Now more scholars and poets began to flock in Anandpur to enjoy the Guru's patronage. One of those poets was Hans Ram who recited the following Kabit and received the reward of Rupees sixty thousands from the Guru :—

ਚਾਰੋਂ ਚੱਕ ਸੇਵੈਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਤਿਹਾਰੇ ਪਾਂਇ,
ਮੇਰੇ ਜਾਨੇ ਆਸ ਤੁੰਹੀ ਦੂਜੋ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਹੈ ।
ਪ੍ਰਬਲ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਖੰਡ, ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿੰ, ਮੰਡਲ ਮੈਂ,
ਸਾਚੋ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਜਾਕੋ ਸਾਚੋ ਸਿਰ ਭਾਰ ਹੈ ।
ਕਾਮਨਾ ਕੇ ਦਾਨਿ, ਬਾਨ ਜਾਂਕੀ ਹੰਸ ਰਾਮ ਕਹੈ,
ਪਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਦੇਖੇ ਬਿਬੱਧ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਹੈ ।
ਪਰਮ ਉਦਾਰ ਪਰ ਪੀਰ ਕੋ ਹਰਨ ਹਾਰ,
ਕੌਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਕੌਨ ਭਾਂਤ ਲੀਨੋ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਹੈ ।*

(People living in all the four directions are worshipping your feet, O Guru Gobind Singh. For me, you are the second creator of the universe. Your grandeur sheds its brilliance in both worldly and ethereal regions. You are the true king and truthful is your crown of responsibility. You are the fulfiller of the wishes, says Hans Ram, who has seen righteousness and nobility prevailing around you. You are filled with benevolence and are ever ready to alleviate the pain of others. Who knows how you have condescended to take birth in this world !).

The poet himself refers to the reward that he received in the following couplet :–

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰ ਰਾਖ ਕਰ, ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਉਦਾਰ ।
ਟਕਾ ਕੀਉ ਬਖਸ਼ੀਸ਼ ਤੱਬ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਸਾਠ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ।**

(First of all, through your generosity, you extended your patronage to me, and then granted me a reward of Rupees sixty thousands).

Many other poets received gifts of horses, elephants, cash, ornaments, clothes etc. So much was the jubiliation among them that they once took out a procession in Anandpur with music bands and war drums leading them. The resultant noise must have alerted the surrounding hill chieftains. But inspired by the unexpected showers which made

* "Suraj Prakash", (Ritu 5, Ansu 26).
** Ibid. (Ritu 5, Ansu 11).

the weather pleasant, Kavi Hans Ram composed a poem addressed to the hill chieftains asking them not to be afraid as no body was going to attack them. It was only a procession of Guru Gobind Singh's poets passing through the town of Anandpur.

Another poet, Chandan, who was greatly impressed by the Guru's intelligence, brought a specially composed Swayya. Transcribed in Roman script it ran as follows :—

Nav Sat Teai, Nav Sat Keai,
Nav Sat Peai, Nav Sat Peaai ।
Nav Sat Rachai, Nav Sat Badai,
Nav Sat Pia, Pai Dayak Paai ।
Jit Kala Nav Satan Ki,
Nav Satan Ke Mukh Anchar Chaai ।
Mano Megh Ke Mandal Mein,
Kav Chandan Chand Kalewar Chaai* ।

On hearing the Swayya, the Guru smiled and told Chandan that it was an ordinary composition which could be explained even by one of his grass-cutters. It did not contain any sentiments of devotion or spiritual longing. On his insistance to explain its meaning, the Gurn called one of his Sikhs, Dhanna Singh, who used to do service by cutting and bringing grass for the Guru's stables. When Chandan recited his Swayya again, Dhanna Singh, with the Guru's blessings, explained it as under :–

"O Chandan Kavi, you seem to have seen a sixteen year old married girl who dressed herself with sixteen types of decorations when her sixteen year old husband was returning home after sixteen months' absence. In order to entertain him she laid out the game of chess containing sixteen squares and herself played the sixteenth trick to impose defeat on her husband. But the latter was very tactful. He ultimately won the game and the girl felt ashamed." Chandan was surprised at the befitting answer but thought it must be due to the Guru's own intellectual powers transmitted to the Sikh. But Dhanna Singh, with the Guru's permission, recited, in return, two of his Swayyas for Chandan to explain them. These, as transcribed again in

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 26).

Roman script, were :–

Meen Mare Jal Ke Parse
Kabhu Na Mare Par Pawak Paai ।
Hathi Mare Mad Ke Parse
Kabhu Na Mare Tan Taap Ke Aaai ।
Tia Mare Pia Ke Parse
Kabhu Na Mare Pardes Sidhaai ।
Guharh Mein Baat Kahi Dij Raj
Bichar Sakai Na Bina Chit Laai ।

Kaul Mare Rav Ke Parse
Kabhu Na Mare Sas Ki Chab Paai ।
Mittar Mare Mit Ke Milbe
Kabhu Na Mare Jab Dur Sidhaai ।
Singh Mare Jab Mas Milai
Kabhu Na Mare Jab Hath Na Aaai ।
Guharh Mein Baat Kahi Dij Raj
Bichar Sake Na Bina Chit Laai ।

Chandan felt non-plussed and could not explain the meanings of those Swayyas. Then Dhanna Singh, again with the Guru's permission, gave the hint to Chandan that if he stopped after 'Kabhu Na' the meaning of every line would become clear to him.

It would be interesting to note that, among the poets and scholars in Guru Gobind Singh's court, only one or two were Sikhs; the rest were all Hindus who were employed by the Guru to render old Sanskrit books in Brij Bhasha or Punjabi. In order to promote higher oriental education among the Sikhs, the Guru also sent some of them, clad in clean clothes as *brahamcharis*, to Kanshi (Banaras) to learn Sanskrit and study higher religious and philosophical works. It is these Nirmalas (followers of Guru Nanak's Nirmal Panth) who, on return, became the custodians of higher education among the Sikhs and others as well. Among the notable names in this category were Pandit Tara Singh Narottam, Sant Gulab Singh, Sant Thakar Dayal Singh, Pandit Ishar Singh (Rishikesh), Sant Thakar Nihal Singh (Thoha Khalsa), Sant Hari Singh, Pandit Gurdit Singh and others. With the change of educational modes and requirements, the community of Nirmala saints has now greatly dwindled away.

TRAVELOGUE FIFTH

BATTLE OF NADAUN

The hill chieftains were still reeling under the impact of their defeat at Bhangani, when Aurangzeb called upon them to pay up their tributes. But they expressed their inability to do so due to lack of resources. Thereupon, Governor Mian Khan of Jammu, who was in dire need of money, was ordered to proceed against the hill chieftains for recovering the dues from them. Mian Khan sent his commander, Alaf Khan, along with a large force, to carry out the orders. Raja Bhim Chand, being unable to face the enemy, approached Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur for help and expressed regrets for having forced the battle of Bhangani on him. The Guru, without any feeling of rancour or enemity, promised to extend his help. He himself led a band of 500 valiant Sikh soldiers and camped in village Baluri. From there he joined arms with the Mughal forces at Nadaun on the side of hill chieftains. There was heavy fighting and by the evening the Mughal forces, unable to face the challenge, left the battle field under darkness of the night.

Writing about the way Alaf Khan behaved, Guru Gobind Singh says :—

ਭੱਜਯੋ ਅਲਿਫ ਖਾਨੰ ਨ ਖਾਨਾ ਸੰਭਾਰਿਯੋ ।
ਭਜੇ ਔਰ ਬੀਰੰ ਨ ਧੀਰੰ ਬਿਚਾਰਯੋ ।*

(Alaf Khan ran away from the battle field without even waiting to have his meals; his fighting force also lost courage and made good its escape).

There is a gurdwara at the site of the camp set up in Nadaun and the place has the peculiarity of numerous 'pipal' trees growing thereon.

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* "Bachittar Natak"—Battle of Nadaun.

While returning to Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh passed through Alusan, Jindwari and Bhulan where there are gurdwaras constructed in his memory.

As if to mark the victory of Nadaun, the Guru was blessed with the second son, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, from Mata Jito Ji. This was in the year 1690 A.D.

FIGHT WITH HUSSAIN KHAN

The hill chieftains, though indebted to Guru Gobind Singh, did not cherish good intentions towards him. They, somehow or other, wanted to keep him subdued. On the other hand, the Mughal armies wanted to avenge their defeat at Nadaun. So, in 1695 A.D., Dilawar Khan sent his general, Hussain Khan, with a large force to attack the Guru. But in the battle that ensued, Hussain Khan was killed and the Mughal force had to beat a hasty retreat. This battle was fought with great fury and it has come to be known in Sikh history as 'Hussaini da Yudh' in which several brave soldiers of the hill chieftains as well as the Mughal army met their doom. Guru Gobind Singh refers to this victory in "Bachittar Natak" in the following words :—

"ਜੀਤ ਭਈ ਰਨ ਭਯੋ ਉਜਾਰਾ । ਸਿਮਿਤ ਕਰ ਸਭ ਘਰੈਂ ਸਿਧਾਰਾ ।
ਰਾਖ ਲੀਯੋ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਜਗਰਾਈ । ਲੋਹ ਘਟਾ ਅਨਤੇ ਬਰਸਾਈ ।"

(With our victory, the battlefield became desolate. After thanking God all returned to their homes. The Lord of the Universe protected me in this battle in which steel arms clashed like lightning and arrows flew like rain).

ATTACK BY BAHADUR SHAH

Enraged at the death of Hussain Khan and impelled by the desire to punish the Guru for his siding with hill chieftains, emperor Aurangzeb deputed his son Muazzam, later on known as Bahadur Shah, to invade the Guru's headquarters at Anandpur with a large force. But, while on the way, Muazzam's Mir Munshi, Bhai Nand Lal, apprised him about the Guru's literary attainments and spiritual greatness and advised the prince not to attack the Guru. The prince, accordingly, went back without resorting

to any military engagement. He sent a report to the emperor that, keeping in view the local circumstances and the danger from the Deccan rulers, he did not consider it expedient to attack the Guru at that time.

BUILDING OF FORTS

Guru Gobind Singh was by now convinced that the hill chieftains by their mean mentality had proved unreliable. The Mughal rulers were also, he felt, out to destroy and eliminate the Sikhs. So, in self defence and for the sake of accommodating large numbers of Sikh soldiers in times of emergency, he started building new forts in and around Anandpur. During the period of seven years (1690-1696 A.D.), he had completed the construction of Fort Loh Garh, Fort Hol Garh, Fort Kes Garh and Fort Anand Garh, to his great satisfaction.

In the same year of completion of the chain of forts, viz. 1696 A.D., he was blessed with a third son, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh, from Mata Jito Ji.

THE WILY ANUP KAUR

In the Dasam Granth, one of the compositions entitled "Charitro-Pakhyan", the authorship of which will be discussed later on, narrates 405 instances of wiles of women against men. In the beginning of the twentyfirst charitar is given the following *dohra* which underlines the reasons for writing that composition :

"ਜੋ ਸਿਆਨੇ ਹਵੈ ਜਗਤ ਮੈਂ ਤਿਯਾ ਸੋਂ ਕਰਤ ਪਿਆਰ ।
ਤਾਂਹਿ ਮਹਾਂ ਜੜ ਸਮਝਿਯੈ ਚਿੱਤ ਭੀਤਰ ਨਿਰਧਾਰ ।"*

(Those wise men of the world who indulge in love with vile women should, without any doubt, he considered as the most foolish persons).

Guru Gobind Singh's fame as an extremely handsome, young and virtuous leader had spread far and wide. A beautiful woman, named Nup Kuar (also called Anup Kaur), had heard about those exquisite qualities of the Guru. She was married to a rich non-Sikh husband who

* "Charitro-Pakhyan" (Charitar 21).

lived in another town and whom she had started disliking. She had once seen the Guru, while he was going out somewhere, and she felt enamoured of him. Her love-stricken heart made her feel miserable. The Guru himself describes her feelings in the following words :

"ਏਕ ਤ੍ਰਿਯਾ ਧੰਨਵੰਤ ਕੀ ਤੌਨ ਨਗਰ ਮੈਂ ਆਨਿ ।
ਹੋਰ ਰਾ ਇ ਪੀੜਤ ਭਈ ਦਿੱਧੀ ਬਿਰਹ ਕੇ ਬਾਨਿ ।"*

(A woman, wife of a rich person from the town of Taun, became love-lorn, having been pierced by Cupid's darts).

Being a vily and wicked woman, she thought of a plan to capture the heart of the Guru. She came to Anandpur, along with her brother, and tried to win over one of the Guru's attendants, named Magan Das, by bribing him heavily. She wanted Magan Das to arrange her meeting with the Guru alone, with promise to pay him a further handsome amount of money. Writes the Guru in the words of Anup Kaur :—

"ਨਗਰ ਰਾਇ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਬਸਤ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਵੋ ਮੋਹਿ ।
ਤਾਂਹਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਦੇਹੁੰ ਤੁਝੈ ਅਮਿਤ ਦਰਬ ਲੈ ਤੋਹਿ ।"**

(Arrange a meeting between me and the Raja of your town (meaning Guru Gobind Singh) and after meeting him I will give you unlimited riches).

As conspired, Magan Das, acting like a go-between, went and told the Guru that a yogi known to him as possessing miraculous powers had arrived whom the Guru might like to meet alone during the night. The Guru, who knews by intuition who the yogi could be and what his intention was, promised that he would certainly go and his arrival might be awaited.

After the evening congregation had dispersed and after taking his meals the Guru put on his tunic and silken *dupatta* and, along with a few Sikhs, went to the place of the proposed meeting. He asked his Sikhs to stay out and himself went inside the house, which was guarded by Anup Kaur's brother who had come as the so called yogi's confidant. Soon the door was closed.

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* "Charitro-Pakhyan" (Chapter 21).

**Ibid.

In place of the yogi the Guru saw Anup Kaur dressed very handsomely and wearing precious jewellery. With a fake veil of modesty, she spoke sweet words for the Guru and thereby wanted to entice him in the meshes of her love. Cutting her talk short, the Guru told her that he was a married person and it was not proper for her to think about him with impure motives. Moreover, he was respected by all Sikhs as their Guru and it would be improper for him to love any woman other than his wife. Anup Kaur cited the example of Sri Krishna who had several wives and who loved numerous *gopis* (milkmaids), but the Guru remained unmoved by that agument. Finding her obdurate, the Guru, adopting a new posture, started praising her beauty in the following words :—

"ਧੰਨ ਤਰਨਿ ਤੱਵ ਰੂਪ ਧੰਨਯ ਪਿਤ ਮਾਤ ਤਿਹਾਰੋ ।
ਧੰਨ ਤਿਹਾਰੋ ਦੇਸ ਧੰਨ ਪ੍ਰਿੱਤ ਪਾਲਨ ਹਾਰੋ ।
ਧੰਨ ਕੁਅਰਿ ਤਵ ਬਕ੍ਰਤ ਅਧਿਕ ਜਾਂਮੈ ਛੱਬ ਛਾਜੈ ।
ਹੇ ਜੱਲਜ ਸੂਰੁ ਅਰ ਚੰਦਰ ਦ੍ਯੂਪ ਕੰਦ੍ਯੂਪ ਲਖਿ ਭਾਜੈ ।"*

(O young lady, your bodily shape and beauty are wonderful; your father and mother, who have given birth to you, are lucky; so is the land in which you have been brought up. Your face and youth which enrich your personality are indeed admirable. The sun, the moon and the god of love lose their pride on seeing you).

Anup Kaur again pursued her intention saying that even the *ber* tree is better than her as it satisfies the wishes of others by shedding its fruit willingly but of what use is her beauty which, though eulogised by the Guru, is not acceptable to him.

The Guru regretted his inability to accept her advances for he remembered the advise given to him by his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, at the time of going to Delhi for martyrdom. That advice, he told her, was :—

"ਸੁਧ ਜਬ ਭੇ ਹਮ ਧਰੀ ਬਚਨ ਗੁਰ ਦਏ ਹਮਾਰੇ ।
ਪੂਤ ! ਇਹੈ ਪ੍ਰੱਣ ਤੋਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਜੱਬ ਲਗ ਘਟ ਥਾਰੇ ।
ਨਿਜ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੇ ਸਾਥ ਨੇਹ ਤੁਮ ਨਿੱਤ ਬਢੈਯਹੁ ।

*"Charitro-Pakhyan" (Charitars 21 & 23).

ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਜ ਭੂਲ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਹੂੰ ਨ ਜੈਯਹੁ ।"*

(From the time I came of age, my father gave me this advice and took this promise from me that, so long as I live, I will love only my wife and will not go to bed with any other woman even in my dream).

Though somewhat disappointed on hearing this solemn advice, she cleverly invited the Guru's attention to the common practice of Rajas and Maharajas to have several keeps, besides their wives, and reminded the Guru that in her view he was also a Raja. But the Guru apprised her of the sin of having extra-marital relations with any woman by relating the following :

"ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੇ ਭਜੇ ਸਹਿਸ ਭੱਗ ਬਾਸੁ ਪਾਏ ।
ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੇ ਭਜੇ ਚੰਦਰ ਕਾਲੰਕ ਲਗਾਏ ।
ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ ਸੀਸ ਦਸ ਸੀਸ ਗਵਾਏ ।
ਹੋ ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ ਕੱਟਕ ਕੌਰਵਨ ਕੇ ਘਾਏ ।"**

(For seducing Ahliya, the wife of Gautam Rishi, god Inder had to undergo the curse of having thousands of signs of woman's private part inprinted on his body. The moon's face got spotted as the result of similar curse. It was on account of carrying away Sita, the wife of Sri Ram Chander, that Ravana earned a bad name and lost his ten heads. The Kauravas too got their legions destroyed for trying to dishonour Darupadi).

The Guru also advised her as if she was innocent. He told her, "Look, thousands of men and women come to pay obeissance to me from within and outside the country and go back with their desires fulfilled. I consider women like my sisters and daughters. How can I ever think of casting a lustful eye on them ?

These counter arguments, though well-intentioned, enraged Anup Kaur all the more and she threatened to either shout loudly to bring disgrace to the Guru or kill him. For sometime the Guru kept silent inspite of provocations from the wicked lady. Then he uttered the following

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* "Charitro-Pakhyan" (Charitars 21-23).

** Ibid.

words in a stern tone :—

"ਦਿਜਨ ਦੀਜੈ ਦਾਨ, ਦੁਰਜਨ ਕੈ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਦਿਖੈਯਹੁ ।
ਸੁਖੀ ਰਾਖੀਐ ਸਾਥ ਸਿਰ ਖੜੱਗ ਬਜੈਯਹੁ ।
ਲੋਕ ਲਾਜ ਕਉ ਤਾਡ ਕਛੂ ਕਾਰਜ ਨਹ ਕਰਿਯਹੁ ।
ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਜ ਪਾਂਵ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਹੂੰ ਨ ਧਰਯਹੁ ।"*

(It is my unflinching desire to distribute charities among the deserving, to keep an eye on the wicked and evil-minded persons, to provide solace to the neighbours and chastise the enemies, to avoid doing anything against good conduct which might bring disgrace and never to step on the bed of another woman, even in dream).

Finding all her villainy to be of no avail, she started shouting 'thief', 'thief'! This naturally embarassed the Guru who rushed out of the house leaving his shoes and silken *duppata* behind. He was accosted at the gate by Anup Kaur's brother who also joined in shouting 'thief', 'thief'! The Guru gave him a good thrashing and removing his turban, pushed him on the ground, calling him 'thief' instead. Soon the noise brought the Sikhs and the neighbours on the spot and all started beating him. No one believed Anup Kaur's pleadings that he was her brother and the actual 'thief' had run away. Her brother was bound hand and foot and kept locked up under guard by the people.

Back safely in his house, the Guru told the congregation in the morning that he had lost his shoes and *duppata*. Those to whom Anup Kaur had given some inkling sought the Guru's permission to bring her in his presence, along with the 'stolen' articles. This was done and she was made to confess the truth before the ladies in a separate apartment. The Guru frankly told her that she deserved severe punishment for her misconduct but, since she was feeling repentent, he would pardon her. She was given a six monthly grant of Rupees twenty thousands and sent back to her home. This happened in 1696 A.D.**

*See "Charitro-Pakhyan" (Charitars 21 and 23) for details.
**Ibid.

It was a strange battle with beauty and love which the Guru won not with arrows but with superior moral conduct. He gave practical demonstration of observing his father's advice in letter and spirit and also acted on Guru Nanak's dictum that "Truth is higher than everything else but higher still is truthful living."

Those historians like Giani Bishan Singh and Prof. Kartar Singh who have mentioned that, at the time of leaving Anandpur, Anup Kaur went along with Guru Gobind Singh and was captured by Sher Mohd. Khan, Nawab of Malerkotla, and, on her death, lay buried there until ner body was exhumed by Banda Singh Bahadur, are wrong in their observations. It was Ram Kaur, the younger sister of Mata Jito Ji who was captured and treated in that manner and it was Baba Sahib Singh Bedi who invaded Malerkotla in 1794 A.D. and exhumed her body for proper cremation, after defeating the then Nawab Attaullah Khan.*

AUTHORSHIP OF "CHARITRO-PAKHYAN"

Modern research scholars** are of the view that Guru Gobind Singh could not have written compositions like "Charitro-Pakhyan" which narrate the baser human instincts, particularly the wiles of women about matters relating to sex. But the author is of the opinion that it is Guru Gobind Singh's composition. The Guru had come to the world to make human beings perfect in the all ways. Sex appeal is a matter which, due to undisciplined mind, most people are likely to fall prey to. He wanted to put his Sikhs on the guard against vily conduct of women, so that, while living in society as householders, they might keep their conduct above board. Being a reputed scholar and poet he had his own style of describing serious as well as romantic situations.

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* See "Twarikh Khalsa" by Giani Gian Singh, "Rajgan-e-Punjab" (Urdu) (Punjab Chiefs) by Sir Lepel Griffin (page 91) and "Gur Jas Hulas" by Kavi Lala Ram (Chapter 16), in this connection.

**"Dasam Granth Da Kartritav" by Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi

The 405 incidents of wiles of women mentioned in "Charitro-Pakhyan" were based on historical events recorded in old books or passed on verbally. The one relating to Anup Kaur was based on his own experience. If the Guru had not been sure of his strong will power, he would not have agreed to meet that wicked lady. His object was to face a difficult situation with confidence and reform the evil-minded person by persuasion, if possible, otherwise by punishment and thus set an example for others to follow. Unless varying life situations are presented in their contrasts, it becomes difficult to understand the realities, good as well as bad. "Charitro-Pakhyan" serves this purpose, accordingly to the present author.

*COMPILATION OF DASAM GRANTH**

It has already been mentioned that apart from getting translations of several old books done by court poets and scholars, Guru Gobind Singh himself wrote a number of compositions, large and small, during his stay at Paonta, Bibhor and Anandpur. Unfortunately, most of those books were destroyed by the Muslim armies or washed away in the river Sirsa at the time of vacating Anandpur Fort. The Dasam Granth, as such, was thus not compiled by or during the life time of Guru Gobind Singh. It was Bhai Mani Singh who collected whatever copies or portions he could have from the Sikhs and compiled the various compositions written from time to time into a book called "Dasam Guru Granth." This he did in 1713 A.D., five years after Guru Gobind Singh passed away in Nanded. The volume compiled by Bhai Mani Singh in his own hand and appended at the end of the Adi Granth is available in the family of the late Raja Gulab Singh Sethi of Hanuman Road, New Delhi. In it the headings of the Adi Granth, like "Sri Rag Mahalla I" is described as "Sri Mukhvak Patshahi I", and so on, in order to bring it in conformity with the headings "Sri Mukhvak Patshahi 10" of Dasam Granth.

Without going into the authenticity or otherwise of the volume compiled by Bhai Mani Singh and the shape given

*Literally meaning Book of the Tenth Master.

to it, it must be recognised that during those turbulent days of post Guru Gobind Singh period when the Sikhs were engaged in life and death struggle under Banda Singh Bahadur, Bhai Mani Singh did a yeoman's service to the Sikh community by collecting whatever material was available from different sources and compiling the same into one volume by giving it whatever shape he thought best at the time. The volume also contains some specimens of the beautiful handwriting and signatures of Guru Gobind Singh in Gurmukhi, Urdu and Persian scripts. There are many other points of historic, literary, military and political significance which can be clarified after a study of this volume. But for this compilation by Bhai Mani Singh, even compositions like Jaap, Swayyas Pat. 10, Shabad Hazare Pat. 10, Akal Ustat, Bachittar Natak and Zafar Nama would not have been available to us.

ABOUT SARB LOH GRANTH

Just as Guru Gobind Singh has given numerous creative and qualitative names to God in Jaap Sahib, similarly he has called Him by new names like Maha Loh or Sarb Loh (the All-Steel) representing His destructive power. All these names have been enumerated in a poetic form in Sarb Loh Granth (the Book of All-Steel).

Swami Harnam Das Udasi of Kapurthala, who has made a critical study of Sarb Loh Granth, has indicated that this book was completed by Guru Gobind Singh himself in the year 1698 A.D. He has also concluded that it contains compositions of some other poets as well but these were accepted by the Guru, just as Guru Arjan Dev accepted the compositions of Bhagats, Bhatts and Sufi fakirs while compiling the Adi Granth.

The following lines occurring in the beginning of Akal Ustat, (Praise of the Inmortal) are exact replica of the composition written under Guru Gobind Singh's own signatures ("Uttara Khase Daskhat Ka"), indicate how important was seeking of the protection of Sarb Loh (the Lord of All-Steel) for the Guru :—

"ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਰਛਾ ਹਮਨੈ।
ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਕੀ ਰਛਾ ਹਮਨੈ।

ਸਰਬ ਕਾਲ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਰਛਾ ਹਮਨੈ ।
ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਰਛਿਆ ਹਮਨੈ ।"

('Akal Purkh' (the Immortal One), 'Sarb Loh' (the All-Steel) and 'Sarb Kal' (the Lord of All-time) are the names given to the Lord Creator whose protection the Guru has invoked in these lines).

Sarb Loh Granth, written in 1698 A.D., is also significant for the concept of Khalsa Panth to which Guru Gobind Singh gave practical shape one year later, i.e., in 1699 A.D.* 'Khalsa', as we know, is a word of Persian origin which means pure, unalloyed, with direct contact or responsibility of the owner. In Hyderabad (Deccan) and Jammu-Kashmir, during the Mughal rule, land or property invested directly in the ruler used to be called 'Khalsa'. Kabir has also used this word, for the first time, for those who reject meaningless rituals and are attached in true love with their creator alone ("Kaho Kabir Jan Bhae Khalse Prem Bhagat Jeh Jani "**)

It seems this title had appealed to Guru Gobind Singh. That is why he had used it extensively in Sarb Loh Granth. Only a few excerpts are given below by way of illustration :

"Atam Ras Jeh Janhe So Hai Khalsa Dev ।
Prabh Mein, Mo Mein, Tas Mein, Ranchak Nahi Bhed" ।

(He who has gained spiritual bliss is real Khalsa. There is no difference between God, me and him).

"Khalsa Mero Roop Hai Khas ।
Khalse Mein hau Karo Niwas" ।

(Khalsa is my form and shape; in Khalsa I reside in spirit).

"Khalsa Akal Purkh Ki Fauj ।
Pragteo Khalsa Parmatam Ki Mauj" ।

(Khalsa is God's own legion; it is created by His own sweet will).

"Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh"

(The Khalsa is of God and victory too is that of God). This

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* This is confirmed by the oldest volume of Sarb Loh Granth, known as "Nabha-Katoo di Bir" and also by other compilations available of that Granth.

**Adi Granth, Sorath Kabir, p. 654.

is the slogan which Guru Gobind Singh devised for implementation of the true concept of Khalsa.

THE REALITY ABOUT DURGA PUJA

Now that warlike preparations, e.g. recruitment and training of Sikh soldiers, building of forts, collection of arms, materials etc. were going on in Anandpur, both the hill chieftains and the Mughal rulers were feeling apprehensive of the increasing strength and popularity of Guru Gobind Singh, particularly among the learned scholars and the down-trodden masses. Some greedy *brahmins*, therefore, thought of blackmailing the Guru by suggesting that he should go in for worship of goddess Durga in order to invoke her blessings to ward off dangers that were looming large around him. After hearing them patiently, the Guru told them that he relied for his protection on Akal Purkh, the Great Time Spirit and Primeval Energy which he also called 'Maha Kal', 'Pritham Bhagauti' and 'Kalka-Chandika'. But if they could reproduce that Primeval Energy in any other visible form, he would consider their request and provide them with the necessary sacrificial materials and also pay them the money for which they were actually making the proposal. Their leader, Keshav Das, promised that he would reveal the goddess by reciting 'chandi mantar salok' one lakh times, but the Guru will also have to put one lakh *ahuti* (offerings) in the sacrificial fire, observe complete celibacy for one year and in return for his services pay him one lakh rupees.*

The Guru replied that after the birth of the fourth son he had already taken the vow of celibacy and that he would arrange to provide them whatever material they needed for their experiment and also pay them the desired money if they proved successful in achieving what they had promised. This was late in the year 1697 A.D. By that time the Guru must have already started writing Sarb Loh Granth which, as already pointed out, was completed in 1698 A.D. and which gives his concept of God, the source of Primeval Energy.

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 3, Ansu 6).

It is recorded that Pandit Keshav Das experimented with the sacrificial fire for nearly ten months, till the middle of 1698 A.D., on top of the Naina Devi hill. The Guru would also occasionally climb on the hill top to watch what was going on. The rest of his time was spent on the bank of the river Sutlej, writing compositions for Dasam Granth. In the beginning of the eleventh month, he asked Pandit Keshav Das as to why the goddess had not appeared till then. The latter replied that the time for her appearance was approaching but the process will be hastened if a celebatarian of high caste was offered as a sacrifice. The Guru was surprised and also amused at that prerequisite and promptly told the Pandit that as he (the Pandit) had also observed celibacy during the period of sacrificial fire for nearly a year, there would be no person better than him for that sacrifice. Sensing the danger he had unwillingly invited, he made good his escape in the early hours of the morning on pretence of going for a bath, content with whatever money or other benefits he had already received.

The Guru anticipated the result of Pandit Keshav Das' experiment. He thought it futile to be associated with it any longer and in a mood of spiritual exuberance dumped the entire remaining sacrificial material into the fire and himself hastened down the hill with a glistening sword in his hand and resplendent glory on his face. When, in the early hours of the morning, the people working in the fields for miles around saw the flames going up in the sky they thought that the goddess had appeared, but Pandit Keshav Das, the progenitor of the big hoax, was nowhere to be seen. It was that Adi Shakti represented by the All-Steel Sword on which the Guru had concentrated his mind and in praise of which he had written verses like the following which resounded and filled the atmosphere all around :

"ਤੁਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮੀ ਬੈਸਨਵੀ ਸੀ ਭਵਾਨੀ ।
ਤੁਹੀ ਬਾਸਵੀ ਈਸਵਰੀ ਕਾਰਤਿਕਿਆਨੀ ।
ਤੁਹੀ ਅੰਬਿਕਾ ਦੁਸਟਹਾ ਮੁੰਡਮਾਲੀ ।
ਤੁਹੀ ਕਸਟ ਹੰਤੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੈ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨੀ ।" (ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨਾਵਤਾਰ 430)

(Thou, O All Steel Sword are the symbol of Brahma, Vishnu and Bhawani. Thou represent Ambika, who wears beads of

human skulls and is the destroyer of evil spirits. Thou are destroyer of the wicked and are the merciful benefactor of the suffering humanity—Krishnavtar 430).

"ਖੜਗ ਕੇਤੁ ਮੈ ਸਰਣਿ ਤਿਹਾਰੀ। ਆਪ ਹਾਥ ਦੈ ਲੇਹੁ ਉਬਾਰੀ।
ਸਰਬ ਠੌਰ ਮੋ ਹੋਹੁ ਸਹਾਈ। ਦੁਸੱਟ ਦੋਖ ਤੇ ਲਿਹੁ ਬਚਾਈ।" (ਚੌਪਈ)

(I seek thy protection, O Lord of All Steel. Save me with thine own hand. Help me in all places and shield me from those with evil intentions towards me). In this connection the footnote* given below may also be seen.

A BIG SACRIFICIAL FEAST ARRANGED

After celibate *tapasya* for nearly a year and as a precursor to his plan to create Khalsa Panth, Guru Gobind Singh decided to arrange a big sacrificial feast. In that feast every one, irrespective of his caste, creed or status, was invited to join. While serving food, no precedence was shown for the *brahmins* as is done by Hindus at such functions. Charities were also distributed freely to all. It was natural that news of this special function would spread in the surrounding areas. Pandit Keshav Das, who had concealed himself till then, also heard about it and came to the Guru for being pardoned for his act of running away from

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* *Footnote.* Historians differ in their views about the worship of goddess Durga by Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Santokh Singh is of the view that the goddess did appear, but others like Surender Das Sharma ("Guru Gobind Singh", page 22) consider it to be a big hoax. The fact remains that the sacrificial fire was arranged by the *brahmins* to blackmail Guru Gobind Singh and at the same time wean him away from warlike preparations, may be at the behest of the hill chieftains. The Guru, on the other hand, associated himself with it by providing sacrificial material etc. and partially attending the protracted ceremony for the sake of exposing the brahmanical faith in such ceremonies and confirming the conviction of the Sikhs in the worship of one Timeless Lord who is Immanent as well as Ominiscient. (See "Gian Prabodh" Pat. 10. Also Teeka Dasam Granth by Giani Narain Singh, p. 318).

Naina Devi hill. But at the same time he could not withhold his anger on seeing *brahmins* being treated at par with low caste *sudras*. He also complained to the Guru for not searching him or waiting for him before starting the *yagya*. The Guru spoke to him thus in a satiric tone :–

"ਜੋ ਕਿਛੁ ਲੇਖ ਲਿਖਿਯੋ ਬਿਧਨਾਂ, ਸੋਈ ਪਾਈਅਤ ਮਿੱਸ੍ ਜੂ ਸੋਕ ਨਿਵਾਰੋ ।
ਮੋਰੇ ਕਛੂ ਅਪਰਾਧ ਨਹੀ, ਗਯੋ ਯਾਦ ਤੇ ਭੂਲ ਨਹ ਕੋਪ ਚਿਤਾਰੋ ।
ਬਾਗੋ ਨਿਹਾਲੀ ਪਠੈ ਦੈਹੋ ਆਜ, ਭਲੇ ਤੁਮਕੋ ਨਿਹਚੈ ਜੀਆ ਧਾਰੋ ।
ਛਤ੍ਰੀ ਸਭੈ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿਪ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ, ਇਨਹੂ ਪੈ ਕਟਾਛ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕੈ ਨਿਹਾਰੋ ।"*

(Pandit Ji, you have got what lay in your destiny, so do not feel sorry for it, After you left I just forgot all about you, so there is no justification for your being angry, Rest assured, I will give you today whatever is customary in the shape of clothes and beddings. If, as you say, all Kshatriyas are the creation of *brahmins*, then instead of criticising them, treat them kindly).

The Pandit was not accustomed to hear such eulogies of the common people. He passed some unbecoming remarks against the Sikhs which the Guru could not tolerate. Pointing towards the Sikhs, he said :–

"ਜੁੱਧ ਜਿਤੇ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਦਾਨ ਕਰੇ ।
ਅਘ ਅਉਘ ਟਰੇ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਫੁਨ ਧਾਮ ਭਰੇ ।
ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਬਿਦਿਯਾ ਲਈ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਸਭ ਸ਼ਤ੍ਰੂ ਮਰੇ ।
ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੇ ਸਜੇ ਹਮ ਹੈਂ, ਨਹੀਂ ਮੋ ਸੇ ਗਰੀਬ ਕਰੋਰ ਪਰੇ ।"**

(I have won battles on account of them and have also distributed charities out of funds supplied by them. With their support and succour all my difficulties have vanished and my coffers are again full. It is because of them that I have acquired education and gained knowledge and all my enemies have been vanquished. I am here on account of these Sikhs, otherwise crores of poor people like me pass their lives in languishment). Again :–

"ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਭਾਵਤ, ਅਉਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਸੁਹਾਤ ਨ ਜੀਕੋ ।
ਦਾਨ ਦੀਯੋ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੋ ਭਲੋ, ਅਰ ਆਨ ਕੋ ਦਾਨ ਨ ਲਾਗਤ ਨੀਕੋ ।

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* "Dasam Granth"–Annotation by Giani Narain Singh, p. 318.
**Ibid.

ਆਗੈ ਫਲੈ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੋ ਦਯੋ, ਜਗ ਮੈਂ ਜਸੁ ਅਉਰ ਦਯੋ ਸਭ ਫੀਕੋ ।
ਮੋ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਮੈਂ ਤਨ ਤੇ ਮਨ ਤੇ, ਸਿਰ ਲਉ ਧਨ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੋ ।"*

(The service of these very people satisfies my mind and that of none others appeals to me. No other charity is as good as the charity given to them. Whatever is spent on them is rewarded in the next world and whatever popularity is gained by other charities pales away into insignificance. My household belongings, my body, mind, intellect and wealth are all at their disposal).

The Pandit felt ashamed on hearing these truthful words and wept bitterly.

CREATION OF KHALSA BROTHERHOOD

Prior to the conclusion of the experiment of sacrificial fire on Naina Devi hill, Guru Gobind Singh had sent invitations in the form of *hukamnamas* to Sikh congregations all over the country to gather in Anandpur on the occasion of Baisakhi of 1699 A.D. So thousands of Sikhs (80,000 according to some estimates) collected in the holy city for that occasion. A day prior to Baisakhi the Guru had the valuable Kabli canopy set up on a raised platform on the hillock of Anandpur. He had also earlier got the land towards the north-east of Anandpur town cleared up for accommodating the Sikhs who had arrived. On the appointed day (March 30, 1699 A.D.), after the morning congregation, they all assembled to hear the special message which their Guru wanted to convey to them. In an atmospere surcharged with anxiety and emotion, the Guru rose and addressed them as under:**

"Guru Nanak's beloved Sikhs ! you have all come here, in response to my call, from distant places after facing untold hazards on the way. While most of you have come from the Punjab, many have arrived from far off places like

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* "Gian Prabodh"–Pat. 10.

**Although no authentic record of his actual speech is available in any book or chronicle, but the gist of whatever could be gathered from various sources has been given here.

Cuttack (Orissa), Bidar (Mysore), Gujrat, Kathiawar and Hastnapur (Delhi). I welcome you all.

"You know, two and a quarter centuries back, Guru Nanak had appeared in this world to convey his message of love, brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. He was friendly to the Hindus and the Muslims alike. For him no one was high or low on the basis of caste. He went to temples as well as mosques and spread his divinely inspired mission of love, faith and fraternity among all. He laid stress on honest living and good conduct and decried meaningless rituals in which people were deeply steeped. Many good-intentioned Hindus and Muslims became Guru Nanak's followers. This mission of peace and love continued to be followed by the second, third and the fourth Gurus.

"The fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, my great grandfather, collected the compositions of the preceding Gurus, Hindu Bhagats and Muslim Sufi saints and compiled the Adi Granth. He also built the Hari Mandir in Amritsar as a centre of pilgrimage and social and religious gatherings. His increasing popularity and the universal appeal of *gurbani* among the Hindus and the Muslims unnerved the then Mughal emperor, Jehangir. He had Guru Arjan Dev put to death on fake charges and also imprisoned his son i.e. my grandfather, Guru Hargobind, in the Fort of Gwalior. Later on, when the emperor realised his mistake, he released Guru Hargobind and tried to establish friendly relations with him.

"Now the Mughal throne is occupied by emperor Aurangzeb who had, in his blind ambition to seize power, imprisoned his father, emperor Shahjahan, and killed his own brothers. In order to wash away his sins, he has assumed the role of protector of Islam and Muslim law. He has got thousands of Hindu temples demolished all over the country and mosques built in their places. Numerous holy books and valuable literary records have been destroyed by his armies and lakhs of Hindus have been converted forcibly to Islam under his orders. In protest against such a tyrannical rule, my father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, sacrificed his life in the hope that it might melt the stony heart of the

cruel emperor. But this has not happened. On the other hand, he has, by his treacherous policy, incited the weak-kneed Hindu hill chieftains to fight against me. He has thus tried to create disunity among the Hindus and the Sikhs.

"Our patience has now been exhausted. Reports are reaching from all over the country that emperor Aurangzeb has issued orders to his governors to destroy Hindu temples and make large scale conversions to Islam.* He is bent upon annihiliating Hindu religion, culture and traditions and make India a purely Islamic country. Time has, therefore, come to make greater sacrifices in order to save our country from the impending catastrophe. So you should all be prepared for it."

SELECTION OF THE FIVE BELOVED ONES

Instantly, the Guru, exuberating with divine lustre on his face, unsheathed his sword and in a thundering and emotion-choked voice spoke :

"This goddess of All Steel (referring to the sword) has to be worshipped today. It has to be appeased for the sake of protecting *dharma*. It is the immanent form of Kalka and Bhagauti and it wants the sacrificial offer before hand. Will any one of you come forward to offer his head before this goddess ?" There was complete consternation among the congregation on hearing this unexpected demand from the Guru. They were afraid that some of them may not be called up individually by name. When the demand was repeated for the third time, a Khatri from Lahore got up hesitatingly and, stepping forward, offered his head at the feet of the Guru. He was immediately taken into an adjoining tent. How he was treated no one can say with certainty and it has to remain a secret known to God and

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* Sir Edward Maclagan has written in his book "The Jesus and the Great Mughal" that throughout their journey from the sea coast to Fatehpuri (Agra), the missionaries saw Hindu temples demolished at all places. The destruction was greater in the Western and North Western regions of the country.

the Guru. But a thudding sound was heard from inside the tent and when the Guru came out blood was dripping from his sword.

The same demand for four more heads was repeated and the same drama was enacted inside the tent on each occasion. After some time the Guru came out of the tent, along with those five Sikhs, who were dressed like saint-soldiers, with swords dangling from their waist-bands and a strange lustrous glory radiating from their faces. They were, in the order they offered themselves, Bhai Daya Ram, khatri of Lahore (Punjab); Bhai Dharam Das jat of Hastinapur (Delhi); Bhai Himmat Rai, water-carrier of Puri (Orissa); Bhai Mohkam Chand, calico-printer of Dwarka (Kathiawar) and Bhai Sahib Chand, barber of Bidar (Mysore, now Karnataka). The entire audience was wonder-struck to witness what had happened and people were feeling ashamed as to why they had hesitated to offer themselves in response to the Guru's call. Members of the Guru's family were equally surprised to see what had happened before their eyes. Another wondrous drama was yet in the offing.*

On the following day, the Guru called for a huge iron vessel and adjusted it on a short hollow stony pedestal. He also obtained some pure water from the river Sutlej and poured it in the vessel. Then sitting beside the vessel in

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* What actually happened inside the tent is a secret known only to the Guru. Bhai Santokh Singh has, however, written in "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 3, Ansu 17) that the Guru had kept goats inside the tent and had slaughtered them one by one. But other writers, having faith in the divine powers of the Guru, are of the view that the Guru cut off the head of each person with his sword and by his spiritual power reunited it with the body to make it whole. Such instances of exhibiting rare supernatural powers are not lacking in the world. They further argue that no one had seen goats going inside the tents or heard their voice during the period that they were there. They feel that killing of goats belittles the greatness of the Gnru who himself was embodiment of divine Shakti.

the customary martial pose he fixed his gaze on the water and started stirring it with a double-edged steel sword (*khanda*) and simultaneously reciting Japji, Jaap Sahib, Sudha Swayyas, Chaupai-Benti and Anand Sahib. While the *Amrit* (Nectar of Immortality) was thus under preparation, a few drops fell outside the vessel. Those were sipped by some sparrows which started fighting among themselves. The Guru smiled for he knew that powerful energy had been instilled in the water through the effect of *gurbani*. The Sikhs sitting around also enjoyed the sparrows' fight and one of them, Bhai Ram Kuar, went and reported it to Mata Jito Ji. According to Bhai Santokh Singh*, she brought some sugar candy and, offering it as her contribution, poured it in the vessel so as to sweeten the Amrit. The Guru felt pleased and told her that she had done well otherwise the Khalsa (the would-be recipients of the Amrit) would have become men of angry and harsh temprament. Now they will develop fighting skill as well as learn to love one another as brothers and sisters. When the Amrit was finally ready the Guru performed the baptismal ceremony by giving five palmfuls of the nectar to each of the five selected Sikhs and making them recite "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh" with every drink. They were declared to be the Guru's Five Beloved Ones and given the name of Singhs (lions) in place of 'Ram' 'Das' or 'Chand' occuring in their previous names.

Then seating the Five Beloved Ones on the dias and himself kneeling before them with folded hands, he begged to be administered the gift of Amrit in the same manner as he had administered it to them. This again was a strange demand on the part of the Guru, for no one could anticipate that the Guru would act as a follower as well. But his instructions had to be obeyed. The Patna-born 'Gobind Rai' was now given the name of 'Gobind Singh' by the Five Beloved Ones. Thus the Guru and the Sikh were merged into the same personality. Bhai Gurdas (II), who was one of the 52 court poets, depicted this unique event in the opening stanza of one of his odes, as under** :

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 3, Ansu 19).

**Bhai Gurdas (II), Var 40.

"ਹਰਿ ਸਚੈ ਤਖਤ ਰਚਾਇਆ ਸਤਿ ਸੰਗਤ ਮੇਲਾ ।
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਧਾਂ ਖੇਲਾ ।
ਗੁਰ ਸਿਮਰ ਮਨਾਈ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਖੰਡੇ ਕੀ ਵੇਲਾ ।
ਪੀਉ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਖੰਡ ਧਾਰ ਹੁਇ ਜਨਮ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ।
ਸੰਗਤ ਕੀਨੀ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮਨਮੁਖੀ ਦੁਹੇਲਾ ।
ਵਾਹ ਵਾਹ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ।"

(The true Lord has set up his abode in the midst of holy congregation. Guru Nanak, the fearless worshipper of Nirankar, had spiritual discussions with the *Sidhas*. The tenth master, Guru Gobind Singh, realising the need to wield the sword, worshipped the goddess of All Steel. He introduced the system of administering baptism of the double-edged sword to the Sikhs whom he made "Khalsa", i.e. the pure ones, responsible direct to him and God. All Glory to Gobind Singh who is master as well as disciple).

THE SACRED WORD AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The newly created Khalsa were required to observe certain discipline in life. Briefly, they were told (1) to utter "Waheguru"* five times in the morning, (2) to recite "Ik Onkar Sat Nam Karta Purkh Nirbhau Nirvair Akal Moorat Ajuni Saibhang Gurprasad"** as the Mool Mantra or Basic Incantation five times, (3) to observe the discipline of five Ks*** and (4) to keep away from four acts of gross misconduct, viz. removing of hair from the body, smoking tobacco and using other intoxicants, eating of meat prepared in Muslim style and having intercourse with Turkish (Muslim) women. These were all intended to keep the body, mind

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* Meaning "Wonderful is the Lord" !

** God is one. He is supreme and true. He is the creator, free from fear and enemity, everlasting, unborn, self-existent and the enlightener.

*** Viz. (1) *Kes* i.e. hair as a sign of manliness (2) *Kangha* i.e. comb for cleanliness of hair (3) *Kara* i.e. steel bracelet as reminder for being above whimsical thoughts and seeking always the protection of the Lord of All Steel, (4) *Kachh* i.e. short pant as underwear and (5) *Kirpan* i.e. sword for self-defence and protection of the weak.

and spirit of the Sikhs vigorous and untarnished by evil influences.

Sarb Loh Granth (the Book of All Steel) is full of praise for the Khalsa who lead disciplined life. The Guru has gone to the extent of saying :

"ਰਹਿਣੀ ਰਹੇ ਸੋਈ ਸਿਖ ਮੇਰਾ । ਉਹ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮੈਂ ਉਸਕਾ ਚੇਰਾ ।"

(He who lives a disciplined life and observes my code of conduct is my Sikh; in fact he is my master and I am his disciple).

Again :

"ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੋ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖ਼ਾਸ । ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਮਹਿ ਹੌਂ ਕਰੋਂ ਨਿਵਾਸ ।"

(Khalsa is my own form and shape; I live in the Khalsa).

"ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੋ ਸਜਨ ਸੂਰਾ । ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੂਰਾ ।
ਉਪਮਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸੇ ਜਾਤ ਨ ਕਹੀ । ਜਿਹਵਾ ਏਕ ਪਾਰ ਨ ਲਹੀ ।
ਯਾ ਮਹਿ ਰੰਚ ਨ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਭਾਖੀ । ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਖੀ ।"

(Khalsa is my brave friend; he is my perfect and true Guru. With one tongue it is difficult to sing the praise of Khalsa fully. What I am saying is nothing untrue. I am doing so with God and Guru Nanak as my witnesses).

The Guru also impressed on the Khalsa to maintain their separate identity at all costs and demonstrated its need through several anecdotes some of which are enumerated in the following pages.

DONKEY WITH LION'S SKIN

A few days after the creation of the Khalsa Brotherhood, a Sikh, Bhai Udai Singh by name, hunted down a lion in the jungle and brought the dead animal in the presence of the Guru who was pleased with the Sikhs' brave and adventurous spirit. He got the animal skinned and had the treated skin sewn on a passing donkey which started roaming about in the fields and creating panic among the people. No one would dare to go near it, nor have the courage to kill it, thinking it to be a lion. The Guru, knowing the secret, too, would not allow his Sikhs to kill the beast. It happended to be the lost donkey of a potter living in the neighbourhood. One day when the potter was passing through the fields, one of laden donkeys started

braying. On hearing the voice of a fellow donkey the lost donkey also joined in the chorus. The potter at once recognised its voice and after giving it a good beating, made it rejoin his flock.

Next day when the matter was reported to the Guru, he told the congregation that the incident had been arranged specially to enable them to draw a lesson from it. That lesson was that the unique personality and separate identity given to the Khalsa must be maintained and not allowed to be diluted or mixed up if they had to lead a respectable life and conduct themselves truthfully. Failure to do so will only result in the treatment meted out to the lost donkey.

LOOTING OF KARAH PRASAD

One day the Guru had a large quantity of 'Karah Prasad' (pudding) prepared. Placing the containers on pedestals, he asked the Sikhs to loot the pudding. Attacking it like a prey, they not only ate it to their heart's content but also carried away large quantities in whatever manner they could. Only one Sikh, Bhai Ram Kaur, stood empty-handed for he did not want to join and compete in the loot. The Guru was watching this holocryptic drama with his own eyes. He prompted Bhai Ram Kaur also to join in the loot, but the latter, who had attained the stage of perfect wisdom, replied tdat, with the Guru's blessings, he had been gifted with the rememberance of God's ambrosial Name which he prized more than anything else. The Guru was pleased with his reply. He advised the Sikhs to imbibe the virtue of contentment and not be carried away by the sinister influence of wealth and other worldly gains.

GREEDY DOGS OF THE HUNT

By creating another queer incident, the Guru taught his Sikhs how to conduct themselves in religious, political and intellectual gatherings. He had large quantities of meat-pulao prepared and kept at one place on the outskirts of the jungle where he had gone at the head of a hunting party. After the chase, he asked his Sikhs to bring their respective hounds and let them loose on the meat-pulao that was spread out for them. The hungry hounds pounced on

the *pulao* and soon, out of greed, started fighting and wounding each other.

Asking the Sikhs to draw a lesson from that incident the Guru explained to them that with the increase of grandeur and glory of the Khalsa, there will be many occasions when they will have the temptation to quarrel and seize power from one another. That must be guarded against and brotherly feelings developed instead. They must remain united under the guidance of capable leaders with integrity, honesty, intuition and foresight as their hallmarks. He further clarified that for the purpose of taking part in congregations and joining in community meals all Sikhs enjoy equal status. They must, however, respect and accept the leadership of those who are capable of providing it. In this way they can remain united and strong and ward off slavery.

BHAI JOGA SINGH OF PESHAWAR

Besides Bhai Prem Singh* of district Hazara, the erstwhile Frontier Province became famous on account of Bhai Joga Singh of Peshawar and his missionary activities. The Muslims called him Jogan Shah.

Bhai Joga Singh came to Anandpur for the first time as a boy of 12 years in the company of his father and other Sikhs of Peshawar, who had heard about the Guru's victory at Bhangani and the birth of the eldest son, Sahibzada Ajit Singh. They wanted to offer their congratulations and brought precious gifts from their province. Guru Gobind Singh was 24-25 years of age at that time, with small beard appearing on his resplendent face. Being somewhat surprised at seeing a youngman being given obeisance, Joga Singh had to ask his father in Pushto whether he was the Guru. When his father replied in Pushto that he was the Guru, the boy bowed in respect like the other Sikhs who had come with him. The Guru had overheard their conversation and, being himself a scholar of Persian and Pushto, he smilingly

* He was later on known for his extensive missionary work in the Poonch area of Jammu and Kashmir.

asked the boy what his name was. In his typical Peshawari style the boy replied, "Vat, Joga".* The Guru felt pleased and, punning on the word "Joga", asked 'for whom' and the boy was prompt in replying 'Vat, Guru Joga' (i.e. I am for the Guru). The Guru blessed the boy and embraced him to the great astonishment of the Sikhs. It is recorded in Sikh history that, when the Sikhs returned to Peshawar, the boy remained in Anandpur in the service of the Guru.

In the year 1699 A.D., when Guru Gobind Singh administered baptism of the double-edged sword to the Khalsa, several Sikhs from Peshawar were also present. Among others, who received the baptism directly from the hands of the Guru, was Bhai Joga Singh. Now that he was 20-21 years old, his father requested the Guru to permit him to go home for marriage. The Guru agreed but Bhai Joga Singh (who had not stood up when the Five Beloved Ones were called to offer their heads) tried to vindicate his position by saying that he would not like to go as he could not bear separation from the Guru. The Guru knew the state of Bhai Joga Singh's mind and persuaded him to go home for marriage and to keep the following advice in view :

"ਔਰਤ ਈਮਾਨ, ਬੇਟਾ ਨੀਸ਼ਾਨ, ਦੌਲਤ ਗੁਜ਼ਰਾਨ"

(For a man, wife is needed as a companion to preserve his morals; a son is needed to maintain continuity of his lineage and money is required for keeping his body and soul together in the world).

After a few days, the Guru, in order to test Bhai Joga Singh's faith, sent him an urgent letter through a special messenger for delivery to him personally while he would be in the midst of the marriage ceremony. It contained instructions that on receiving the letter Bhai Joga Singh should start at once for Anandpur, leaving all other work aside. He did so, leaving even the marriage ceremony incomplete. On the way, which involved several stages of journey, Bhai Joga Singh's mind was filled with strange

* 'Vat' is merely a colloquial from of conversation, peculiar to West Punjab; 'Joga' literally means 'for someone' in Punjabi.

cross-currents of thoughts. He knew of instances where newly married Sikhs had left their young wives behind to obey the call of their Guru but there could have been no instance, he thought, where a Sikh might have left in the midst of marriage ceremony, as he did. Thus he felt pride in what he had done and "pride hath a fall."

One evening, from the place where he was resting on the last leg of his journey*, he happened to see a sixteen years old beautiful prostitute standing on the balcony of the house on the opposite side. He lost control over his mind and was overpowered by lust. After night fall he went up the stairs of the prostitute's house and to his disappointment saw a guard in royal robes on duty there with a stout stick in his hand. He tried to go up thrice but every time he was checked by the guard. He thought that some rich customer might have posted him there for the whole night. He waited until the day dawned and then left in extreme disgust and shame.

On the following day when Bhai Joga Singh reached Anandpur, the Guru smiled on seeing him. He stood in the congregation with a downcast look, full of shame and remorse. The Guru continued his laughter which was rather unusual and a matter of surprise for the congregation. On inquiry, the Guru told the congregation to ask for the reason from Bhai Joga Singh himself. The latter fell at the Guru's feet and narrated the whole story correctly. He then realised that the guard in royal uniform was no one else than the Guru himself in disguise, who had taken all the trouble of protecting his Sikh from falling into evil.

The Guru was happy that Bhai Joga Singh had spoken out the truth. He blessed him and asked him to go home, lead a married life and be righteous in his conduct. Bhai Joga Singh, later on, became a successful missionary and propagated the Sikh faith extensively in the frontier region.**

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* In district Hoshiarpur of the Punjab.

**In Peshawar (now in Pakistan) there is a big gurdwara constructed in memory of Bhai Joga Singh. Now, in Delhi (Patel Nagar) we have a High School and a gurdwara after Bhai Joga Singh's name. There is also a similar gurdwara in Koliwara, Bombay, in his memory.

MEETING WITH BABA KALA DHARI

Baba Kala Dhari Bedi of Saloh (near Una) was ninth in order of lineage to Guru Nanak. He was a religious-minded and God-fearing person who has been highly spoken of by the English writer, Sir Lipelle Griffin, in his book on Punjab Chiefs. Saloh is nearly 24 miles north of Anandpur. Being fond of hunting, Baba Kala Dhari loved Guru Gobind Singh's adventurous spirit and would often go out on hunting forays with him. It is recorded that he had attended the Amrit ceremony held on Baisakhi Day of 1699 A.D., along with his son, Ajit Rai, who received the baptism of double-edged sword and was renamed Ajit Singh. Baba Kala Dhari was very much impressed with the whole ceremony and saw clearly the spirit of Guru Nanak working in Guru Gobind Singh.

The Guru was also pleased to baptise one of the Bedi descendents of Guru Nanak with his own hands. Reading intuitively the future of young Ajit Singh, the Guru prophesied that not only he but his son also would become widely-known and well-respected persons, particularly the latter, who would, by his spiritual eminence, hold sway on several Rajas and Maharajas and would also be worshipped as a guru.* At the time of departure, Guru Gobind Singh presented to Baba Kala Dhari Rupees five hundreds in cash, besides precious robes and a horse. Thereafter also they used to go out together for hunting. After a few years, Baba Kala Dhari received a gift of 140 bighas of land in Una from the Mughal court at Delhi. From that time onwards, Baba Kala Dhari shifted his abode from Saloh to Una and the family is known as Bedis of Una.

BHAI NAND LAL ARRIVES

Bhai Nand Lal belonged to a khatri family of Ghazni. He came to India in the wake of Persian invasions and

* This prophesy came out to be true when after 43 years of Guru Gobind Singh's passing away, Baba Sahib Singh Bedi was born in 1756 A.D. in the house of Baba Ajit Singh. Baba Sahib Singh Bedi was a highly revered person. The author has written his life history in the Book entitled "Raja Yogi".

became Mir Munshi of Prince Muazzam (later on known as emperor Bahadur Shah). Though a learned and renowned scholar of Persian and Arabic, Nand Lal had not adopted any guru till then. While at the royal court he had heard and read the reports submitted to the emperor by the reporters stationed in Anandpur, describing how Guru Gobind Singh created a new Order of the Khalsa and how the baptism of the double-edged sword was administered to them. He longed to meet the Guru who was reported to possess unique qualities of scholarship, poetic erudition and military leadership. He managed to come to Anandpur once and met Guru Gobind Singh. Having formed the Guru's image in his mind, he returned to Delhi.

In those days emperor Aurangzeb was patronising Islamic studies. He wanted to know the meaning of a difficult stanza of the Koran but no *maulvi* or scholar could satisfy the emperor. Then he asked his son, Prince Muazzam, who generally remained in the company of scholars, to explain the meaning. The Prince could not do it by himself, so he consulted his Mir Munshi, Nand Lal, whose explanation satisfied the emperor. But the emperor insisted on such a proficient scholar of Arabic being brought in the fold of Islam. When Prince Muazzam, who was favourably inclined towards Nand Lal, informed him of the emperor's desire, Nand Lal decided to leave service at the royal court permanently and go to Anandpur in the service of Guru Gobind Singh. During his stay at Anandpur, as the Guru's devotee, he wrote a poetical composition in Persian, called "Bandgi Nama", in praise of the personality and virtues of the Guru, who blessed it and lovingly called it "Zindgi Nama".

It is particularly noteworthy that, in contrast to the emperor's orders to convert Nand Lal to Islam, Guru Gobind Singh never insisted on his taking the baptism and becoming a full-fledged Singh. He, however, imbibed the basic concepts of Sikhism, including *Nam-Simran*, and spread the Guru's message wherever he went. He had been one of the topmost poets of the Guru's court, with 'Goya' as his poetic name, and his compositions were inspired by love and faith in the Guru.

IMPORTANCE OF LANGAR*

Because of large number of devotees arriving day and night in Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh had started several community kitchens where meals were served free to all visitors. One such kitchen was run by Bhai Nand Lal. The Guru used to visit all the community kitchens, in disguise, and watch their working. Once he went to some of the kitchens a little before time and expressed his extreme hunger. But everywhere he was told to come a little later when the meals would be ready. At the kitchen of Bhai Nand Lal alone, he was politely informed that the meals were under preparation but as he was in a hurry he was offered whatever was ready in the form of flour and semi-cooked pulse in two separate utensils. The Guru (in disguise) accepted them and brought the two utensils along with him to his residence.

On the following morning, the Guru narrated the whole story before the congregation and impressed on all to adopt the attitude of love and sympathy exhibited at the kitchen of Bhai Nand Lal. In the words of Bhai Santokh Singh the Guru said :—

ਮਮ ਸਿਖ ਪਿਆਰੋ ਦੇਗ ਜੁ ਕਰੈ । ਛੁਦਤਿ ਕਰਨ ਕੀ ਛੁਧਾ ਜੋ ਹਰੈ ।
ਸਭ ਦਾਨਨ ਤੇ ਉਤਮ ਦਾਨ । ਜਿਸ ਕੇ ਦੀਏ ਬਚਤਿ ਹੈ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ।**

(I love those Sikhs who run free kitchen service and feed the hungry; the best charity is the one by giving which life is saved),

SECOND BATTLE OF ANANDPUR

After the battle of Nadaun, in which Guru Gobind Singh had helped Raja Bhim Chand, the former hoped that the hill chieftains would allow him to live in peace. But this did not happen. The hill chieftains continued to be jealous of the growing popularity and greatness of the Guru in the minds of the common people. They prompted emperor Aurangzeb to take strong action against the Guru.

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* Community kitchen where free meals are served to every one, irrespective of his caste or creed.

**"Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 3, Ansu 26).

Accordingly, a large Mughal force, under the command of Generals Dina Beg and Painde Khan, invaded Anandpur in 1700 A.D. Painde Khan advanced first and challenged Guru Gobind Singh to come out and face him. When the Guru confronted him he aimed two arrows at him from which the Guru saved himself by swiftly swerving aside. Then in reply the Guru aimed his arrows at Painde Khan and, although the latter's body was covered with steel armour, one of his naked ears was pierced through, resulting in his instant death. Dina Beg was also severely injured and the Mughal army fled in disarray.*

The hill chieftains were disappointed at this failure of their strategy. They themselves collected a large force consisting of Ranghars, Gujjars and Rajputs and marched against Anandpur. The Sikhs too gathered from far and near, and in the ensuing battle, there was heavy loss of life on both sides. But the ultimate victory was that of the Guru. This battle took place on the outskirts of Anandpur in 1701 A.D.

EPISCOPIC SYSTEM OF MASSANDS ABOLISHED

By that time, the Sikhs had spread all over the country. Those who could not come to Anandpur personally would deposit their offerings with the *massands* (missionaries) appointed for different areas. Reports were being received in Anandpur to the effect that those *massands* had become corrupt, were misappropriating the offerings and had fallen prey to vice. One day some bards sought the Guru's permission to play a drama in his presence in which the malpractices adopted by the *massands* were exposed. On seeing the drama some sikhs were convinced of those malpractices and they, as well as the Guru, felt very much perturbed and unhappy about it. The houses of some of the *massands* were searched and the misappropriated money recovered. Stern punishment was awarded to those found guilty. There were others who begged to be excused for their past actions and approached Mata Sundri Ji to intercede on their behalf on

* See 'Sadha Itehas' by Principal Satbir Singh, p. 336 (based on the observations of Ghulam Hussain, author of "Sair-ul-Mutakhrin").

promise of good behaviour in future.* The Guru abolished the episcopic system of *massands* and asked the Sikhs to bring their offerings directly in future. That step completed the concept of 'Khalsa' which meant direct responsibility to the Guru without the help of any intermediaries.

MAI BHAGAN OF AGRA

On one occasion, a large number of Sikhs had arrived from different parts of the country to see the Guru and receive his blessings. Among them was a lady (Mai Bhagan) from Agra. After the congregation, the Guru enquired from the Sikhs if there was any woman among them who had never abused or cursed any man. There was silence for some time but soon Mai Bhagan stood up and, with folded hands, stated that with the Guru's blessings she had been able till then to maintain that practice. When everyone was surprised to hear this, the Guru asked the Mai to dilate on what she had stated. Accordingly, she spoke as under :–

"Maharaj, my father was a Dewan. He was rich but had no son. We were seven sisters. When our father died our property was put under court supervision. But when the authorities learnt that our mother was again pregnant, and, later on, when a son was born to her, the authorities removed the guard from our house and all doors were opened. This incident confirmed in my mind the value and importance of a male who would, in due time, grow beard on his face and don a turban on his head—the two distinct signs of man's respect in society. From that time onwards, I have always respected men and never spoken ill of them."

The Guru blessed Mai Bhagan and recited the following Persian couplet for the enlightenment of all :—

"ਦਾਹੜੀ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਔਨ ਖੁਦਾਏ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਸ਼ੁਮਾਰੈ ।
ਬਗੈਰ ਦਾਹੜੀ ਸ਼ੈਤਾਨ ਬਿਸਾਹਸ ਨ ਕਰਦਮਹਿ ।"**

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* We have already seen earlier how Guru Gobind Singh had punished the *massands* who had tormented Ram Rai (husband of Punjab Kaur) by burning him alive in his *samadhi* at Dehra Dun (p. 32).

**"Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 4, Ansu 6).

(With beard man looks like the image of God; without it even the devil will not have faith in any one).

THE STORY OF A VANJARA

Once a trader brought an offering of Rupees two thousands for the Guru. He was a new-comer and, on inquiry by the Guru, disclosed that he belonged to Multan and was a follower of Pir Nagahya. He had come to sell his merchandise but found that he was losing Rupees sixty thousands in the bargain. He remembered his Pir for remedying the situation but found his prayer to be unhelpful. Then he enquired about any other man of God who could save him from the loss. A Sikh referred him to the Guru and a sincere thought of him so altered the market conditions that, instead of loss, he was able to make a profit of Rupees sixty thousands. It was out of that profit that he had brought the offering of Rupees two thousands.

The Guru smiled and told the trader that if someone stops the cattle from grazing in another's field he cannot claim ownership of that field. So the Guru advised him to go and deliver his offering to Pir Nagahya. The trader could not refrain himself from revealing that he had tried the Pir repeatedly but found him to be unhelpful. Since the very thought of the Guru had saved him from the loss he offered himself for being baptised as a Sikh. The Guru, finding him sincere in his heart, granted his wish by accepting him in the Sikh fold.

SWIFT JUSTICE

Near the Guru's court, Bhai Kahan Singh from Malwa was plastering a wall with mud somewhat carelessly. Some of the mud got sprinkled over the dress of the Guru who happened to pass that way. The Guru was apparently annoyed and wanted him to be given a slap on the face. He was also warned to do his work carefully. On hearing these instructions all the accompanying Sikhs started slapping the Malvai Sikh, some on his face and others on his head. This enraged the Guru for he could not tolerate the hair on a Sikh's head being disrespected. As a measure of swift

justice the Guru desired somebody to offer the hand of his daughter for marriage with the aggrieved Sikh. A Sikh who had come from Kandhar accepted the proposal and the Guru solemnised the marriage in his presence to the satisfaction of all.

KAZI SALAR DIN'S QUESTION

Kazi Salar Din was a resident of Anandpur. Being pure of heart he often came to hear the Guru's discourses. He saw large numbers of Sikhs coming every day from near and far off places and making offerings to the Guru who, in turn, would give them his blessings and grant their wishes for worldly comforts and progeny. Once the Kazi, finding the Guru alone, put the following question to him :

"Sir, it is an accepted doctrine of both Islam and Hinduism that whatever man has to get in this life is written in his destiny from the time of his very birth. Then what is the utility and importance of your granting their wishes here ?" The question was weighty. And the Guru explained the correct position to the Kazi as under :—

"Kazi Ji, it is correct that whatever man receives, does or suffers in his life is predestined. No one can change his destiny which is formed on the basis of his past actions. But the Almighty God has empowered Gurus, Pirs and *Avtars* to reduce or cancel the effect of his past actions if he is sincerely repentent and conducts himself righteously in this life. Just as a stamp becomes legible only after it is pressed on paper, so is one's destiny transformed after one submits himself to the Guru and is blessed with his grace."

The Kazi was satisfied with the answer and went away with the following attitude of mind :—

ਅਨ ਖ਼ਦਾਇ ਅਬਲ ਗੁਰੁ ਆਮਦਹ ।
ਕਦਮ ਮਿਸ੍ਤ ਬੰਦਹ ਜਹਾਨ ਪਾਰ ਕਰਦਮਹਿ ।*

(At the very first sight the Guru has revealed himself to be the image of God. He has bestowed greatness on this devotee and enabled him to cross the world's ocean).

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 4, Ansu 5).

BATTLE OF LOH GARH FORT

It is an irony of fate that the hill chieftains living around Anandpur failed to recognise Guru Gobind Singh as their saviour and a national leader. Had they joined hands with the Guru their combined strength would have brought down the tyrannical rule of the Mughals nearly two centuries earlier. Instead, they kept on fighting with the Guru and thereby weakened their collective strength.

Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur was the leader of the hill chieftains. But he did not possess the foresight to realise the difference between friend and foe. He again made war-like preparations and advanced towards Loh Garh Fort at the head of a large force. His plan was to break open the gate of the fort with the help on an intoxicated elephant and let his forces enter the fort in large numbers. Raja Kesri Chand was to start the fighting which was going to be heavy, by all calculations.

The Guru, through his intelligence service, came to know of the plan for the impending attack and decided to meet it at all costs. He asked Duni Chand *massand*, a hefty stalwart, to get ready to face the elephant. Bhai Udai Singh was to deal with Raja Kesri Chand. But Duni Chand *massand* developed cold feet and in his attempt to escape from the fort broke his legs and died. In his place Bhai Bachittar Singh was deputed to make a frontal attack on the elephant. Instead of waiting for the elephant to attack, the Guru opened the gate of the fort and let Bhai Bachittar Singh go out on his horse back with a *nagni* dagger in his hand. He was followed by Bhai Udai Singh and several Sikh soldiers on horsebacks to join the battle. In a swift move, Bhai Bachittar Singh jumped at the elephant and, in spite of a steel plate tied on its forehead, was able to pierce it successfully with his dagger. The wounded elephant shrieked and ran away trampling the enemy forces under its feet. In a separate hand to hand fight Bhai Udai Singh challenged Raja Kesri Chand who shot an arrow at the former but it missed the target. Bhai Udai Singh now wielded his sword and in a moment cut off the head of Raja Kesri Chand who was otherwise known to be a brave fighter.

With the death of Raja Kesri Chand and the running away of the much-prided elephant, Raja Bhim Chand lost courage and withdrew from the battle field, accepting his defeat. The Sikhs too lost heavily in this battle but the victory was theirs. This was the third battle which the hill chieftains fought with Guru Gobind Singh unsuccessfully.

THE FALSE OATH

Raja Bhim Chand felt ashamed at his treacherous behaviour. He wrote an opologetic letter to Guru Gobind Singh and sent it, along with a cow made of kneaded flour, swearing by it to the effect that if the Guru left Anandpur for a few days it will save his and other hill chieftains' face. He pleaded that the past be forgotten and appealed to the Guru's sense of being the protector of the Hindus. The letter was put on a platter and placed stealthily outside the Loh Garh Fort during the night by a *brahmin* messenger of Raja Bhim Chand. The Sikhs picked up the letter in the morning and brought it to the Gutu who after reading it smiled. He knew about the hypocritical intentions of the hill chieftains but because of their swearing by the cow decided to leave Anandpur on the following morning, much against the wishes of his Sikhs. He justified his decision in the following words of Bhai Santokh Singh :—

ਜੋ ਹਮ ਧੇਨ ਸਪੱਥ ਨਹਿ ਮਾਨੈ, ਆਨ ਕੌਨ ਤੁਬਿ ਮਾਨੈ ।
ਦਿਯਾ ਸਿੰਘ ! ਚਿਤ ਸਮਝ ਬਿਚਾਰੋ, ਰਿਪੁ ਜੀਵਤਿ ਹਤਿ ਜਾਨੈ ।
ਰਾਜਨਿ ਕੋ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਬਿ ਧਿਗ ਹੈ, ਸ਼ੱਸਤ ਗਹਿਨ ਧਿਗ ਹੋਈ ।
ਹਮਰੋ ਤੋ ਅਨੰਦਪਰ ਘਰ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਮਹਿ ਅਪਰ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ।*

(If I as a Kshatri do not accept their swearing by cow, who else will do it. Bhai Daya Singh ! you understand it that the hill Rajas, though alive, are virtually dead, for cursed is their cowardly life and cursed are the arms they carry on their bodies. Anandpur is and will remain our home, there is no doubt about it).

On hearing this the Sikhs kept quiet and got busy with preparations for leaving the town the next morning, as desired by the Guru. But in their heart of hearts they were

* "Suraj Prakash (Ritu 4, Ansu 37).

not happy with the decision as they knew too well from experience that the hill chieftains never honoured their words and were treacherous by nature. On the other hand, the Guru wanted to put their sworn pledge to test, so that if they broke it he would be justified in dealing with them without mercy in future.

TRAVELOGUE SIXTH

BATTLE OF NIRMOHI

The Guru had vacated Anandpur and camped at Nirmohi in order to put the honesty and vows of the hill chieftains to test. Nirmohi is not far from Anandpur. The Guru put up his abode on the top of a hillock and asked his cavalarymen and soldiers to encamp in the plains around that hillock. Those in charge of elephants preferred to pitch up close to the nearby jungle in order to collect fodder for the animals easily. But on the very first day,the hill chieftains went back on their vows and attacked the Sikhs who had gone inside the jungle to cut grass etc. The enemy had also pitched their tents in the plains below, with the intention of surrounding the Guru's forces from all sides. The Sikhs met the challenge bravely and there was loss of life on both sides. A gunner of Raja Bhim Chand also fired cannon balls twice at Guru Gobind Singh but failed to hit him directly. Instead, the gunner and his companion both lost their lives from arrows shot at them one after the other in reprisal by the Guru.

Raja Bhim Chand, dishonest as he proved to be, wanted to wage another war with Guru Gobind Singh. He called for help from Wazid Khan, Governor of Sirhind. The Khan himself came at the head of a large force to strengthen the attack of Raja Bhim Chand. There was a pitched battle between the Sikhs on one side and the combined forces of the hill chieftains and the Mughals on the other. The treacherous hill soldiers made the Mughals fight in the front line and themselves remained in the rear. This was objected to by Wazid Khan and the hill chieftains felt ashamed. Throughout the day the Sikhs fought valiantly and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. The Guru watched the examplary

courage and heroism shown by his men in this battle and praised their sense of devotion and responsibility. Before the nightfall, both sides looked after their dead and the injured. Wazid Khan and the hill chieftains were amazed at the martial spirit of the Sikhs and the war strategy and resourcefullness of Guru Gobind Singh.

RAJA OF BASALI ARRIVES

Meanwhile, the Raja of Basali, a devotee of the Guru, had arrived to pay homage and invite the Guru for a stay in his State across the river Sutlej. He condemned the treachery shown by Raja Bhim Chand and his accomplices and insisted on the Guru accompanying him to Basali. But the Guru did not think it proper to leave Nirmohi while the battle was still undecided. So he sent an advanee party to Basali and promised that he himself would come later.

On the second day again there was heavy fighting in which Wazid Khan also joined. The Guru himself too had to fight his way through the battle which took place on the bank of the river. In that battle, Bhai Sahib Singh, one of the Five Beloved Ones, along with several other Sikhs, fell fighting. The Guru and the remaining soldiers were, however, able to cross the river unharmed during the night, leaving the Mughal armies non-plussed at what had happened. Feeling discouraged, the hill chieftains told Wazid Khan :

ਨਾਹੱਕ ਸੈਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਰਵਾਵੋ, ਗੁਰੂ ਸੂਰਮਾ ਭਾਰੀ ।
ਹਮ ਕੋ ਕਹਿਤ ਕਿਆ ਹੋਯੋ, ਅਬਿ ਤੁਮ ਲਿਹੁ ਨਿਹਾਰੀ ।*

(It is no use getting our soldiers killed. The Guru, as we told you, is a valiant fighter. You have been telling us that we have not proved effective against the Guru. Now you ee with your own eyes as to what has happened).

When the night fell and the enemy had retreated, the Guru sent parties back to the battle field to collect their dead and cremate them. Bhai Sahib Singh had been cremated earlier before crossing the river. They also attended to those who were wounded in the course of fighting. This

* "Suraj Prakash (Ritu 4, Ansu 45).

is how the battle of Nirmohi, fought in the year 1702 A.D., ended.

During his stay in Basali, the Guru would hold congregations both in the mornings and the evenings as usual. He would also go around hunting with the beat of Ranjit Nigara which would keep the hill chieftains on the alert.

RAJA OF BHABOR ARRIVES

The Raja of Bhabor was another devotee of the Guru. Having been a follower of Baba Kala Dhari, he knew the greatness of Sikh gurus and whenever Guru Gobind Singh came towards Bhabor for hunting, he used to invite him and provide necessary services and other facilities. He had stayed in Bhabor previously also. The place is situated on the high west bank of the river Sutlej (near Nangal) and is enchanting on account its scenic beauty. It was there that Guru Gobind Singh had composed "Charitro-Pakhyan" in 1606 A.D. at the end of which 'Chaupai-Benti'* occurs.

Once again, while on a hunting expedition from Basali, the Guru happened to go near Bhabor. The Raja of Bhabor heard about the Guru's arrival in his area. He went out, along with his courtiers, to receive him and entreatingly brought him and the entire hunting party to his palace where he served them with great love and devotion. The Rani of Bhabor was also a devoted lady and was very happy to see the Guru in their midst. Although the Guru wanted to return to Basali before nightfall, the persuasions of the Raja and his family made him agree to stay in Bhabor for some more time. The Guru was very much pleased with their devotion and he showered his blessing on them **

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* "ਹਮਰੀ ਕਰੋ ਹਾਥ ਦੈ ਰੱਛਾ ॥ ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਇ ਚਿਤ ਕੀ ਇੱਛਾ ॥...
ਸਰਬ ਠੌਰ ਮੋ ਹੋਹੁ ਸਹਾਈ ॥ ਦੁਸਟ ਦੋਖ ਤੇ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਚਾਈ ॥"
(Grant thy protection to me, O Lord, and fulfil my heart's desires. Help me in all circumstances and save me from my enemies and hardships that may afflict me).

**This visit of the Guru to Bhabor has been beautifully narrated by Bhai Vir Singh in one of his tracts "Rana Bhabor" published by Dr. Balbir Singh Sahitya Kendra, Dehra Dun (Tr.).

PLUNDER OF KAMLOT

During the stay at Bhabor, some war-minded Sikhs complained to the Guru that in the absence of apportunities to fight they were feeling bored. The Guru smiled and spoke to them as under :

"Do not get impatient, Khalsa Ji ! You will have to engage yourselves in fighting throughout your lives. There will be those who will envy your Rajput like names, form and valour. The orthodox Hindus will not like your discarding the caste system and bringing every one at the same social level. The Mughals will remain your enemies for the reason that you are putting a stop to their high-handedness and bigoted rule.

"You will have to fight against all these odds and only then will you be able to establish your sovereignty. This was a warning to all the Sikhs about the future in store for them."

Just at that time, some Sikhs came from a distant town crest-fallen and without any offering in their hands. On being asked about the reason for their disappointment, they burst out saying that they had brought some valuable presents for the Guru but the people of Kamlot had looted everything on the way. On hearing this some of the Sikhs, who were looking for opportunities to fight, wanted permission to go immediately and plunder Kamlot so as to bring back the looted articles. But the Guru asked them to wait till the next morning as Kamlot lay across the stream.

On the following day the Guru himself got ready and, riding on his favourite horse, led the punitive party. He rested outside Kamlot under a tree and allowed the Sikhs to do the needful. The Sikhs took no time in rampaging and plundering the town and recovering the looted presents. The womenfolk of the town ran away hither and thither but the menfolk hid themselves inside the fort. They could not, therefore, be punished. The Sikhs posted 24 persons to stay as sentries near the Guru's camp and in the early hours of the morning surrounded the fort from all sides and started demolishing it. The inmates of the fort saw certain death

waitinig for them. They came out on the walls of the fort and raised signs of surrender. They begged to be excused and promised good behaviour in future. The Guru in his mercy pardoned them.

Back in Bhabor, Bhai Daya Singh reminded the Guru that at the time of leaving Anandpur, the latter had promised that Anandpur was theirs and they would return to that place. He pleaded with the Guru that instead of going to Basali, they should return to Anandpur. The Guru agreed and accordingly the party marched towards Anandpur directly from Bhabor.

TRAVELOGUE SEVENTH

BACK IN ANANDPUR

The Sikhs found the town of Anandpur devastated and plundered. The earlier atmosphere of gaiety had vanished. But the Guru was as remorseless and as buoyant in spirits as before. When his return to Anandpur came to be known, the people again started flocking to the town. Thousands of Hindus who had heard about the Guru's exploits and had not yet taken the baptism of the double-edged sword were eager to have it. They came in groups and went back to their homes as Sikhs with turbans tied on their heads and swords dangling by their sides, ready to be summoned to fight against the tyrants at any time. In the unending convoys of such aspirants, the Guru saw the fulfilment of his ambition in life. He had infused in the helpless Hindu society the spirit of fearlessness and made the tyrants have the taste of All-Steel.

Anandpur was once again humming with activities. The newly created Khalsa were men of determination, whose mothers and wives sent them from home with explicit warnings never to betray the Guru whose baptism they had received. They were proud of their men and were prepared to tolerate their martyrdom rather than ignomony due to any act of desertion on their part.

On the other hand, Raja Bhim Chand and other hill chieftains had guilty conscience. They were unable to stand the wails of their war widows who were living in a state of helplessness and poverty. The hill chieftains too did not have enough money to pay the tributes due to the Mughal emperor at Delhi. They, particularly Raja Bhim Chand, had misunderstood Guru Gobind Singh. Instead of joining hands with him in his efforts to exterminate oppressive rule

from the country, they acted as tools in the hands of the Mughal rulers. Just for petty selfish ends, they picked up quarrels with Guru Gobind Singh repeatedly and unnecessarily.

The wily Bhim Chand, again, after consulting his ministers, sent a letter of apology to Guru Gobind Singh and asked for forgiveness for his past actions. He promised that in future he would act according to the wishes of the Guru. Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh, whom the Guru consulted, thought something fishy about the letter. They knew the treacherous motives of the hill chieftains and advised the Guru that the letter had been written to gain more time to recover from the previous losses in men and materials. The Guru had a different outlook. He told them that in God's creation things were ordained. No one died unless the time, place and reason for his death coincided. The hill chieftains were feeling repentant and had approached the Guru for pardon. Since there was no feeling of enemity in Guru Nanak's house it was befitting for the Sikhs to forgive them. In case the hill chieftains again misbehaved, the Sikhs would be justified in retaliating. It was accordingly decided to accept the letter of apology and let the past he forgotten. On receipt of the Guru's reply, Raja Bhim Chand was overjoyed. He, along with other hill chieftains, sent baskets full of fruits, sweets and other valuable presents to the Guru in order to show that they had really become his devotees.

MATA SAHIB DEVI

After the incident at Kamlot, the Sikhs were now travelling to and from Anandpur freely. There was also no interference from the side of hill chieftains who were now lying low.

During those days, a convoy of Sikhs from Rohtas, in district Jhelum, came to Anandpur. Among them was one Ramu Khatri Sikh who had come along with his young daughter, named Sahib Devi, with the intention of marrying her to the Guru. Ramu said he had been told by astrologers that her daughter was destined to become the wife of a

royal person. He had the Guru in view and had, therefore, brought her up in secluded environments in order to escape from the evil eyes of the local Muslim rulers. Unless the Guru accepted her hand, her life would be wasted.

The Guru thought for a while. He told Ramu that eversince the birth of the fourth and the youngest Sahibzada Fateh Singh, he had taken the vow to lead a life of celibacy. It would, therefore, not be possible for him to marry his daughter. However, taking a pity on her condition, the Guru agreed to entertain her in his household on the condition that she will remain a virgin attached to Mata Gujri Ji, Guru Gobind Singh's mother.

After about six months, when Sahib Devi saw the youngest Sahibzada Fateh Singh, then nearly six years old, toddling about and showing childish pranks, she also expressed a desire to the Guru to have a similar child. The Guru had anticipated this request but advised Sahib Devi to stick to the promise made by her father at the time of her admission to his household and also allow him to stick to his resolve to remain a celibate for the rest of his life. Finding her somewhat disappointed, the Guru consoled her and, through his farsightedness, declared her to be the mother of Khalsa Panth which, he told her, will be of eternal fame and enjoy great prosperity with passage of time. According to Bhai Santokh Singh, he told her :—

ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਤੇਰੋ ਭਇਉ । ਗੋਦ ਪਾਏ ਭੁੱਤ ਹਮ ਨੇ ਦਇਉ ।
ਮਹਿਥ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਮੇਤ ਨਿਹਾਰੋ । ਸਦਾ ਅਨੰਦ ਬਿਲੰਦਹਿ ਧਾਰੋ ।
ਸੁਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਭਈ ਅਨੰਦ । ਮਾਨਿਯੋ ਬਾਕ ਹਾਥ ਕਰ ਬਦ ।
ਮਸਤਕ ਟੇਕਤ ਨਿਜ ਘਰ ਗਈ । ਸੰਤਿਤ ਜਾਨ ਹਰਖ ਨਿਜ ਭਈ ।*

(I have placed Khalsa Panth in your lap as your son. They will call you as their mother and me as their father. They will prosper and ever remain in buoyant spirits).

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 51).

Note: Sikh history records that under the British rule during all agitations, when the Sikhs courted arrests in large numbers, they used to mention the names of Guru Gobind Singh as their father and Mata Sahib Devi as their mother e.g. at Guru Ka Bagh, Jaito, Gangsar etc. Tr.).

On hearing those words from the Guru's mouth, Mata Sahib Devi felt happy and, with folded hands, bowed before the Guru and, thereafter, passed her time in contentment in the service of Mata Gujri Ji.

BHAI JAGGA SINGH

Bhai Jagga Singh was a devoted Sikh who kept himself busy in the personal service of the Guru. He would wave fan over the Guru's head and press his feet when tired. The Guru also was very pleased with him and allowed him to stay near to him. Some of the Sikhs felt envious of Bhai Jagga Singh and often taunted him for his overbearance. The latter would listen to whatever they said out of jealousy but laughed it away without uttering a word from his mouth. The Guru knew the state of their minds and in order to make them wiser asked for a *patasa* (small candy cake) and a small stone of the same size to be brought and placed in a vessel containing water. After some time the Sikhs found that the candy cake had dissolved itself in water but the stone had remained uneffected. Thereupon, the Guru advised his Sikhs in the following manner :

"Khalsa Ji ! several Sikhs come in Guru darbar every day. There are some who shed their ego and merge themselves in Guru's love, while others, who express their faith only outwardly, remain uneffected like the stone. You know that lotus flower and frog both exist in water, but while the latter eats muddy grass, the former keeps its head above the surface of water and maintains its beauty and grandeur. Similarly, the fleas sticking to a cow's teats suck blood while the calf drinks milk to its heart's content. In the same manner, every one tries to show respect to the Guru, but there are few who really enjoy his love and blessings." Those Sikhs, who were feeling jealous of Bhai Jagga Singh, realised their mistake and went home with their minds enlightened.

BABA KALA DHARI DISPLEASED

Once a person, who was a goldsmith of Sahnewal (district Montgomery), came to see the Guru in the guise of

a Bedi Baba. He was wearing a *seli-topi** on his head and was having a rosary in his hand. These two things used to be the insignia of Bedis, the direct descendents of Guru Nanak. The Guru knew him to be an imposter but, out of respect for the form and look of Bedis, Guru Gobind Singh offered him Five hundred rupees, along with a robe of honour and a horse. The person, while going down the slope of Anandpur hill, thought in his mind that he had cleverly cheated the Guru who must also be cheating his Sikhs likewise. As soon as this thought occurred to him, the Guru sent his Sikhs to bring him back. His *seli-topi* and rosary were snatched and kept by the Guru with him. In order to put the poisonous thought out of his mind, the Sikhs, with the Guru's permission, gave him such a beating that it ended in his death. As soon as the news spread in the countryside and reached Baba Kala Dhari in Una, the latter, without verifying the truth, was displeased with the Guru, somuch so that for several months he did not meet him or went with him for hunting as he felt that he had only punished an imposter and not a genuine descendent of Guru Nanak. Later on, through mutual attraction, both managed to meet each other while hunting in the jungles of Bhabor, near Nangal. They came down from their horses and after embracing each other, out of pent-up love, sat under a *palah*** tree. For sometime they talked about Guru Nanak and the battles fought by Guru Gobind Singh. But when Baba Kala Dhari broached the subject of the fake Baba's death, the Guru explained to him the real story of the

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* A typical cap woven out of black wool or silk which Guru Nanak wore on his head during his travels. This practice was continued by Nanak-Panthis upto the days of Guru Arjan Dev. Guru Hargobind deposited the *seli-topi* in *toshakhana* and, instead, wore two swords of *miri* and *piri*, representing temporal and spiritual power respectively.--"Mahakosh".

**At the place of this meeting, there is now a gurdwara, called "Gurpalah". The story that in this meeting Guru Gobind Singh prophesied that guruship will return to Bedi family at the time of Bedi Sahib Singh, grandson of Baba Kala Dhari, is not supported by the author.—Tr.

imposter. This satisfied Baba Kala Dhari and the impression in his mind that the Guru was trying to treat the Bedi Babas in the same manner as he had done with the *massands* was removed.

RAJA BHIM CHAND'S TREACHEROUS MOVE

Due to silence on both sides, Raja Bhim Chand had thought that his treacherous move to win over the Guru had succeeded. During this period of lull he deputed a *brahmin*, named Machar, as intelligence agent in the Guru's court. He brought several presents from the Raja and promised to remain in the Guru's service and do his biddings. Actually, he was expected to send secret reports about the Guru's activities to Raja Bhim Chand. The Guru knew the reality behind this move and refused to accept the presents. But on the insistence of some prominent Bedi and Sodhi Sikhs, who were present in the congregation at that time, he relented and allowed the *brahmin* to stay in his court. As a clever person, the *brahmin* endeared himself to the Sikhs but secrety went on sending reports to Raja Bhim Chand.

At that time, Wajid Khan of Sirhind had sent a Mughal force to Lahore under the command of Generals Said Beg and Alaf Khan. Raja Bhim Chand, the unreliable crook that he was, prompted the generals to attack Anandpur on the way. The Raja himself also brought his troops and encamped them two or three miles outside Anandpur on the pretence to make them available for the Guru's help. The Guru understood his treacherous move. When the Mughal forces actually attacked Anandpur, the Guru did not invite Raja Bhim Chand for help. The Sikhs, under the Guru's command, fought bravely. General Said Beg had heard a lot about the Guru. He refused to fight against him any more and requested for forgiveness to have invaded Anandpur. General Alaf Khan was wounded in the battle and the Mughal forces retreated. This battle of Anandpur was fought in 1701 A.D.*

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* "A History of the Sikhs" by Dr. Ganda Singh (First edition, p. 366).

TRAVELOGUE EIGHTH

MEETING IN RAWALSAR

Rawalsar, located near Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, was famous for a fair held there every year. It was also known for its ancient Buddhist temples and a natural lake.

The *brahmin*, deputed by Raja Bhim Chand as a secret agent in the Guru's court, had by now established himself as a confidant among the Sikhs. He informed the Guru about that fair which he said was attended by all the hill chieftains. He persuaded the Guru to visit Rawalsar on that occasion and take the opportunity to meet and have consultations with them in order to remove misunderstanding, if any, from their minds. The idea appealed to the Guru who reached Rawalsar, along with members of his family and some prominent Sikhs. He had the famous Kabuli canopy installed near the lake and invited all the hill chieftains at a conference for discussing matters of national importance. During the discussions he addressed the assembled Rajas as follows :

"You may be having misgivings about the Khalsa Panth that I have created and the military preparations that go on in Anandpur. But rest assured, I have no territorial ambitions. My only objective, for which I have come to the world, is to uphold righteousness and punish the wicked and the oppressors. It is for that purpose that the Khalsa Brotherhood has been created. If you also join that brotherhood, our joint efforts will succeed in turning out the tyrant rulers from the country. You will then rule not only over your small principalities but over the entire country. It is a national challenge before all of us."

But the hill chieftains, guided by petty, selfish motives and blinded by caste prejudices, did not respond favourably.

It was the first effort for national consolidation in the north that had failed. It happened in 1701 A.D.*

FROM RAWALSAR TO MANDI

After the failure of the conference with hill chieftains at Rawalsar, the Guru went and stayed in Mandi, at the invitation of the Raja of that State who was Guru's devotee. The Guru himself stayed near the river bank (where there is a gurdwara now) but allowed members of his family, including the Sahibzadas, to stay in the Raja's palace. Being pleased with the Raja's love and devotion, the Guru prophesied that whenever the hill areas happen to be invaded, Mandi will escape from being plundered. This came to be true in the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh when the Sikh armies conquered other hilly areas but spared Mandi. The Raja of Mandi also showed to the Guru the fort of Kamlah Garh which was known for its strength and invincibility. But according to the Guru's prophesy that fort was overrun by the forces of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who awarded it to Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia for governance.**

THE VIRGIN PRINCESS OF CHAMBA

From Mandi, the Raja of Chamba, who had attended the conference at Rawalsar and was impressed with the Guru's personality and ideas, took the Guru and his family to Chamba. He had spoken about the Guru to his grown-up daughter who, like Aurangzeb's daughter, Zeb-ul-Nisa, was a literary-minded lady. With her parents' permission, she wrote and sent the following couplet to the Guru, through one of her female attendents :—

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* "Sadha Itehas" by Principal Satbir Singh (p. 334). Also see "Itehas" by Khazan Singh.

**cf. "Guru Dham Sangreh" by Giani Gian Singh (p. 266) where it is stated that being a secluded place suitable for religious contemplation this fort was later on converted into a Sikh temple and a Granthi College, with an annual grant of Rs. 18,000/.

ਸਾਰਾ ਪਉਣਾ, ਦੂਜਾ ਗਾਉਣਾ, ਨਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਥੇ ਦੋਨੋ ਭਉਣਾ ।
ਕੁਛ ਖਾਧਾ ਕੁਛ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸਉਣਾ, ਉਤਰ ਦੇਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਜੀ ਕਉਣਾ ।*

(Sara Pauna, Duja Gaona, Nar Nari Thai Dono Bhauna ।
Kuchh Khada Kuchh Lai Ke Sauna, Uttar Deho Guru Ji
Kauna ।)

On reading it, the Guru thought the princess to be an intelligent person. He wrote back the following quatrain in reply to her queries :—

ਜਾਣੋ ਸਾਰਾ ਦੇਵ ਦੇਹਿ, ਪਾਉਣਾ ਮਾਣਸ ਦੇਹਿ ।
ਦੁਬਧਾ ਦੂਜੀ ਕਰੀ ਗਵਨ, ਨਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਲਗ ਹੁਏ ਖੇਹ ।
ਉਭੇ ਲੋਕ ਭਉਂਦਾ ਫਿਰੈ, ਕੁਝ ਖਰਚ ਜਾ ਮਾਲ ।
ਪਰਲੈ ਭਈ ਸਉਣਾ ਹੁਆ, ਉੱਤਰ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਬਾਲ ।**

(Human body is the quintessance of God's creation but the feeling of duality keeps it transmigrating. Men and women both fritter away their energies and ultimately end their lives in dust. Whatever wealth they amass is spent away and when death comes they go to eternal sleep. These are the replies to your question, O child !).

When the princess read the reply, she formed some image of the Guru in her mind and longed to see him in person. Her parents allowed her to do so. When she went to the Guru and made her offering, the Guru touched her shoulder with the point of his arrow and beckoned her to sit down.

The princess could not restrain herself from asking the Guru as to why he had touched her shoulder with his arrow and not with his hand. She pleaded that she had developed faith and a feeling of devotion for him in her heart and wanted to know why she had not been treated as the Guru's *dasi* (servant). According to Macauliffe, the Guru replied that he avoided patting other women on their shoulders with his hands. Bhai Vir Singh, on the other hand, is of the view that the Guru told her that touching by his arrow was intended to silence her mind's emotions, just as the tyrant's devlish intentions are put to an end by its fling. But the

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 5).
**Ibid.

present author is disinclined to agree with both these views which he considers to be unrealistic. According to him, the Guru, who had the experience of Anup Kaur still fresh in his mind, must have thought it wiser to avoid repetition of such a situation from the very beginning by touching the body of the princess only with the tip of his arrow. The Guru alone knew what passed in his mind on seeing the princess in his presence.

Bhai Santokh Singh records, in this very connection, that the Guru gave sound advice to the princess who went back with a contented mind to stay in her parents' home as a virgin throughout her life.*

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 5).

TRAVELOGUE NINTH

FROM CHAMBA TO ANANDPUR

From Chamba the Guru returned to Anandpur via Jawala Mukhi in Kangra. On the way, thousands of hill people came to see the Guru and have his blessings. But the hill chieftains, for their narrow selfish ends, remained inimically inclined towards him. After the failure of talks in Rawalsar and being afraid of the Mughal rulers, they wanted to either eliminate the Guru from their midst or allow him to remain only as their vassal. They had failed in their former attempts as they could not defeat and capture the Guru even with the help of Mughal forces. In their latter attempts they tried to win him over by sending, after every defeat at his hands, letters of apology and presents, but they could not deceive him permanently and damp his national spirit. Now again, Raja Bhim Chand sent a supplication to the imperial court in Delhi for military aid. Emperor Aurangzeb deputed General Said Khan to invade Anandpur with a large force and subdue the Guru once for all.

SAID KHAN'S CONVERSION

General Said Khan happened to be the brother-in-law (sister's brother) of Pir Buddhu Shah of Sadhaura who had sacrified his two sons and many followers in the battle of Bhangani. Inspite of his sister's advice, he insisted on fighting with the Guru and capturing him alive. After battling for some days with the Sikhs outside the Anandpur Fort, General Said Khan impulsively thought that if the Guru is omniscient he should come and meet him alone in the battle field. Soon he saw the Guru riding on his horseback in front of his tent. The Guru challenged him to strike first if he so desired. But the mere sight of the Guru

converted him and he became the Guru's admirer. It was a case of love at first sight. In ecstasy, he shouted "Hear ye folks ! It is God or man of God that has come to me or it is His light in human form which has completely won me over". Saying this, he laid down his arms and, with the Guru's blessings, went towards Kangra to stay away from the imperial court for the rest of his life. How happy his sister must have been at that decision !

THE CURSE OF SWEARING

'Dal Shingar' was the name given to a horse of high pedigree which a Jat Sikh, Kapura by name, had brought and presented to the Guru. Riding on that horse, the Guru once went out for hunting, along with some Sikhs. They captured several birds and animals alive and killed others. When the entire lot was brought back the Guru sat down at once place and started feeding his eagle with the flesh of one of the dead birds. At that time a group of sadhus had arrived from Ujjain. One of them, who was young in age, could not tolerate the sight of a bird eating the flesh of another bird before his eyes. On his objection, the Guru explained the background of the whole affair as follows :—

"This bird which has been killed was a thief in one of its past lives and the eagle happened to be a Raja. The Raja was one of my devotees in my previous life when I was known as "Dusht Daman" (Destroyer of the Wicked). The thief had stolen some articles of the Raja but escaped punishment by swearing in my name. The Raja accepted his sworn word although he was a liar. But under the Law of Karma the thief had been undergoing transmigration from one birth to another until today he was called upon to settle his account and meet his destiny".

The sadhus realised the significance of the event and were satisfied. The Guru, however, gave the following advice to one and all, including his Sikhs :—

ਸਪੱਥ ਨ ਕਰ ਗੁਰ ਸਾਚ ਪਰ, ਝੂਠਾ ਟਿਕੈ ਨ ਪਾਇ ।
ਸਾਚਾ ਜੋਨੀ ਪਰ ਭੂਰੀ, ਕੂਰੇ ਕੈਸਾ ਥਾਇ ।
ਬਦਲਾ ਦੇਵੈ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ, ਮੰਦਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ।
ਹੋਇ ਹੈ ਭਾਗੀ ਪਾਪ ਕੋ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਜਾਮਨ ਹੋਇ ।

ਕਰਹੁ ਨ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਪੱਥ ਕਬ, ਕੈਸਹੁੰ ਬਨਹਿ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ।
ਕਬ ਸਾਚੀ ਭੀ ਨਹਿ ਕਰੋ, ਨਰਕ ਪਰੈ ਠਰ ਕੂਰ ।*

(Never swear in the name of the true Guru. The liar will never be able to gain a foothold. One who is truthful will pass through his life unscathed but the liar cannot expect any resting place. Do not commit sin, for you will have to face retribution and, even if you swear in the name of the Guru, you cannot escape punishment. Therefore, do not swear in Guru's name, however difficult the situation may be. Even if you are right, swearing in tne name of the Guru must not be resorted to. The one who is untruthful will, of course, have to go to hell).

BRAHMINS REFUSE TO ACCEPT CHARITY

The *brahmins* were not happy at the creation of the Khalsa Brotherhood which obliterated caste distinctions and restored the concept of human dignity. They felt that their clientele and sources of income had been reduced. Except for the respect shown by them to individual Sikhs, thsy were not favourably inclined towards the Khalsa Brotherhood as such.

The Guru once thought of arranging a grand charity in the customary style. He collected one hundred maunds each of iron, mustard oil and whole *mash* pulse and asked the Sikhs to distribute those articles among all *brahmin* families. But the *brahmins* refused to accept the same as charity. Thereupon, the Guru had the whole lot distributed among the Sikhs. The iron materials, vessels etc. were melted and converted into bracelets and rings. From then onwards, the Guru decided that, since the *brahmins* were keeping away, he would also disown them for any sacrificial purposes. On hearing these words of the Guru, a Sarswat *brahmin*, who was a family priest of Sodhis, stood up to request that they be exempted from the decree as they were not to blame. The Guru replied that Sarswat *brahmins* will remain connected with Guru's house in asmuch as they will be respected like *sants* and *fakirs*. Most of these Sarswat *brahmins* have actually been worshipping Guru

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 12).

Granth Sahib and serving as professional readers of the scripture in Jammu and Kashmir.

Some Sodhis, who were sitting there, also requested that since they had never spoken ill of the Guru, they might also be excused. To them the Guru replied :

"I am going to entrust guruship to Khalsa Panth. Whoever accepts this and treats the Panth like me will be blessed and become prosperous. The Khalsa Panth has deserved and I have given to them the following :—

ਅਮੀਰੀ, ਵਜ਼ੀਰੀ, ਫਕੀਰੀ, ਤਤਬੀਰੀ, ਜੋਹੀਰੀ, ਅਕਲਗੀਰੀ,
ਦਾਨ ਕੀ ਦਹੀਰੀ. ਬੰਦੂਕ ਤਰਭੱਸਗੀਰੀ*

(Riches, nobility, humility, resourcefulness, wealth, wisdom, charitable disposition and ability to use arms).

These words were overheard by Mata Jito Ji. She could not refrain herself from asking that, if everything was given to Khalsa Panth, what would be left for her progeny. The Guru's reply was that her progeny will enjoy immortal status and will be remembered with great respect and devotion by the entire Khalsa Panth. Only Mata Jito Ji could understand the prophetic nature of those remarks.

ASPIRATION OF THE SIKHS

The Sikhs were filled with joy on being designated as the sons and inheritors of the Guru whose everything belonged to them according to the Guru's own sayings. They were also happy that as Singhs they were not required to bow their heads before barbers for shaving. They had been given an unique form and look which had transformed them from jackals to lions. In return, the Sikhs once thought of making a goldern bungalow for the Guru which could be seen from a distance and praised by all. They wrote out letters to Sikhs residing at various places to send at least one end a quarter *tola* (nearly 3 grammes) of gold per family. In a few days gold worth several thousands of rupees in the shape of gold coins, pounds, and ornaments were collected. The Sikhs were looking for suitable opportunity to start gilding the Guru's residence by covering it with gilded plates.

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* "Suraj Prakash (Ritu 5, Ansu 9).

But God willed otherwise. When the Guru came to know that the combined forces of hill chieftains and the Mughal army were planning to attack Anandpur, he decided to throw away all precious articles, gold, ornaments, clothes etc. into the river Sutlej. Mata Gujri Ji pleaded that instead of throwing them in the river, the articles may be distributed among the Sikhs. But the Guru carried out his resolve as he did not like his Sikhs, who had to fight battles, to get embroiled in wealth collected from charities.* It is said that on hearing about it Raja Bhim Chand deputed several divers to bring out the discarded treasure but they could not succeed. The Guru prophesied that what had been thrown away belonged to the Khalsa and time will come when they themselves would recover the same.

IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

A Sikh, Bhai Lal Singh by name, had come from an eastern province and brought with him a shield for presenting to the Guru. He claimed that the shield was made from such a strong material that no bullet could pierce through it. The Guru promised to test it on the following day. Meanwhile, Bhai Lal Singh felt sorry for having insisted on the superior quality of the shield. During the night he got *karah prasad* prepared and requested five Sikhs to pray to the Guru for protecting his honour at the time of the test.

Next day, the Guru asked one of his good shots, Bhai Alam Singh, to aim at the sheild and pierce it. He did so thrice but was unsuccessful to the great astonishment of everybody. Bhai Lal Singh himself was non-plussed but he had the strength of his faith in his heart. The Guru then took the gun in his hands and, aiming at the shield, asked Bhai Lal Singh to call any other supporter he liked. The latter fell at the Guru's feet and, explaining the effort he had made during the night, beseeched that his prayer then was also before the Guru himself as he had no other suppor-

* According to "Suraj Prakash", the value of cash thrown away in the river alone exceeded Rupees nine crores. The ornaments and clothes dumped into the river were in addition.

ter. He begged to be excused for his fool-hardiness in insisting on the superior quality of the shield. The Guru, in his mercy, had accepted his prayer overnight. That was why Alam Singh was unable to pierce the shield during the test.

The Guru impressed upon the Sikhs how efficacious and important sincere prayer was. But at the same time he expressed the view that it was not necessary to resort to prayer in matters like testing of a shield. After all, the qualities of arms and other manufactured articles vary and there was nothing astounding about the quality of any particular article.

FAITH OF HARGOPAL DAS TESTED

Among the Sikhs who came to pay homage to the Guru from distant provinces was a young person, Hargopal Das by name, who arrived from Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, with the persuasion of his father, Bishambar Das. He presented to the Guru Rupees five hundred but when he saw the Guru resorting to hunting and killing animals, he felt sorry for having made the offering to one who believed in violence. The Guru understood what passed through Hargopal Das' mind and, at the time of his departure, gave him some *karah prasad* and a steel bracelet weighing four *tolas* (nearly 48 grammes) for his father. On the way, Hargopal Das stayed at Chamkaur with a Sikh, named Bhai Dhian Singh. He told the latter that his father had come to Anandpur earlier and offered Rupees one hundred to the Guru who blessed him merely with Sikh faith. Now he had come and offered Rupees five hundred and got in return only some *prasad* and a steel bracelet from the Guru. This made him sad.

Bhai Dhian Singh felt pity at the lack of faith and commercial-mindedness of Hargopal Das. He at once collected all his valuables and pawned them with a money-lender. He paid Rupees five hundred to Hargopal Das and took from him the *prasad* and the bracelet given by the Guru.

Hargopal Das did some business on the way with that money and earned some profit out of it. Back home,

he narrated his experience to his father who reprimanded him for his foolishness and lack of faith. He took his son at first to Bhai Dhian Singh in Chamkaur and from there all the three went to Anandpur to seek pardon from the Guru. The Guru was magnanimous enough to forgive the childish behaviour of Hargopal Das. Both he and his father stayed in Anandpur in the service of the Guru for several months. It is recorded* that during that period Hargopal Das received the Guru's baptism and returned to Ujjain as full-fledged Singh.

Appreciating the faith displayed by Bishambar Das before the congregation, the Guru said as follows :—

ਸਹਿਜ ਧਾਰੀਆਂ ਆਦਿ ਸਿਖ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਛਾਪ ।
ਖੰਡੇ ਪਾਹੁਲ, ਹੱਤਨ ਕੇ ਤੁਰਕਨ, ਸਿੰਘਨ ਥਾਪ ।**

(The sehajdhari was the primaeval Sikh having Guru Nanak's imprint on his faith. He who takes baptism of the double-edged sword becomes 'Singh' for chastising the Turks, meaning the oppressive rulers).

The Guru also blessed Bhai Dhian Singh of Chamkaur for the part played by him in transforming Hargopal Das. He also told the congregation that like the setting sun his bodily form was also likely to vanish. But with every dawn people again look at the rising sun. Similarly, after him (i.e. the Guru), the Khalsa will prosper and spread rays of virtues, knowledge and nobility all round.

ADVICE TO A SANYASI

Prompted by Bishambar Das of Ujjain, a *sanyasi* also came from that town to pay homage to the Guru. He stayed at Anandpur for several days and heard the Guru's sermons daily. He was impressed by the Guru's teachings but was not willing to give up the life of renunciation. One day he took courage and asked the Guru to advise him how, while living as a *sanyasi*, one could achieve self-realisation. The Guru told him that real *sanyas* lies in the following attitude of mind :

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 5, Ansu 13-16).
**Ibid. (Ritu 5, Ansu 6).

"ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੋ ਕਰ ਸੰਨਿਆਸਾ ॥
ਬਨ ਸੇ ਸਦਨ ਸਭੈ ਕਰ ਸਮਝਹੁ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਮਾਹਿ ਉਦਾਸਾ ॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਜਤ ਕੀ ਜਟਾ ਜੋਗ ਕੇ ਮਜਨ ਨੇਮ ਕੇ ਨਖਨ ਬਢਾਉ ॥
ਗਿਆਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਆਤਮ ਉਪਦੇਸਹੁ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਭੂਤ ਲਗਾਉ ॥੧॥
ਅਲਪ ਅਹਾਰ ਸੁਲਪ ਸੀ ਨਿੰਦ੍ਰਾ ਦਯਾ ਛਿਮਾ ਤਨ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ॥
ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਦਾ ਨਿਰਬਾਹਿਬੋ ਹ੍ਵੈਬੋ ਤ੍ਰਿਗੁਣ ਅਤੀਤ ॥੨॥
ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਹੰਕਾਰ ਲੋਭ ਹਠ ਮੋਹ ਨ ਮਨ ਸੇ ਲਾਵੈ ॥
ਤਬ ਹੀ ਆਤਮ ਤੱਤ ਕੋ ਦਰਸੈ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਹਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥੩॥"*

(O mind ! adopt renunciation of the following type :

Prefer family life to living in forests and imbibe the feeling of detachment in your mind;

Let celibacy be the matted hair, attunement of body with soul as the bathings and discipline as the long nails;

Seek spiritual enlightenment through Guru's knowledge and let God's Name be the ashes for smearing the body;

Let the diet and sleep be but brief and make kindness and mercy the basis of love towards all mankind;

Continence, contentment and aloofness from the three *gunas* (Rajo, Tamo & Sato) should be the mainstay of life;

Do not allow the mind to be tarnished by lust, anger, pride, greed, stubbornness and attachment.

Only then can one have self-realisation and be united with his Creator).

The *sanyasi* felt new vistas of enlightenment opened up before him and he went back satisfied and wiser with the Guru's teachings.

METHOD OF NAAM-SIMRAN EXPLAINED TO MATA JITO JI

The Guru's court was like the mythological *kalap-briksh*, the fullfiller of all desires. Whoever came—may be soldiers, saints, scholars or princes—received the type of advice and teaching suitable for them.

One day, finding the Guru alone, Mata Jito Ji requested the Guru for enlightenment about the true concept of yoga. The Guru explained this difficult subject as follows :

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* "Shabad Hazare" Pat. 10.

"There are two types of yoga. One is Hatha Yoga which is followed by yogis. It is a difficult path involving complicated practices. That is why Guru Nanak had said :

"ਕਾਲੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਨਾਂ ਹੀ ਸਤ ਕਾ ਢਬੁ ॥
ਥਾਨਸਟ ਜਗ ਭਰਿਸਟ ਹੋਏ ਡੂਬਤਾ ਇਵ ਜਗੁ ।।੧।।
ਕਲ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਾਰੁ ॥
ਅਖੀ ਤ ਮੀਟਹਿ ਨਾਕ ਪਕੜਹਿ ਠਗਣ ਕਉ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 662)

(These days, there is neither the time, nor the inclination to unite with God. People also do not know the method of truthful living. Places of worship are polluted and the world is nearing destruction. God's Name is the most valued thing in Kalyuga. The imposters, with closed eyes and noses held by fingers, pose to sit in meditation in order to deceive the people—Translation based on "Shabdarath").

The second type is Sehaj Yoga. In this, one has to proceed slowly and practise rememberance of *Naam* regularly in a mood of love and devotion. The method is to get up in the early hours of the morning and, after taking bath, recite Mool-Mantar (the prologue of Jap Ji) or the whole of Jap Ji, while dressing up Then sit down at a clean place on a seat and go on repeating "Waheguru" *gurmantar* (i.e. the Guru's word) by tongue until the mind stops wandering. Then resume the practice through breath-control, saying 'Wah' while inhaling and 'Guru' while exhaling, until it becomes regulated. Thereafter, with greater concentration, the practice is continued through *'surt'* (consciousness), which follows the Guru's word in perfect harmony. This is called Sehaj Yoga which can be practised even while walking. Some people, on account of their past deeds and inclinations, achieve mastery in a short time, whereas others may take a longer period. A stage comes when meditation becomes continuous and effortless and is known as *ajapa jaap*, i.e., without any apparent effort or sign of recitation.

Mata Jito Ji had hardly practised Sehaj Yoga for nearly a year, when one day, while in meditation, she saw fearful and blood-curdling scenes. She saw in her trance the destruction of the city of Anandpur, death of all the

four sons of the Guru and Mata Gujri Ji lying in an unconscious state. When human consciousness, through deep concentration, is linked with consciousness of the Almighty, it is possible to gain such knowledge of the past as well as the future. Bhagat Kabir has testified this possibility in the following verse :—

"ਇਹ ਮਨੁ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਇਹ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਉ ॥
ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਕੋ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਇਹੁ ਮਨ ਲੇ ਜਉ ਉਨਮਨਿ ਰਹੈ ॥
ਤਉ ਤੀਨਿ ਲੋਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਤੈ ਕਹੈ।" (ਪੰਨਾ 342)

(The mind has in it the source of material energy as well of spiritual awakening. In rarified condition, it assumes the attributes of the five elements of life. When thinking of the mind is lifted to higher plane, it attains the status of *brahmgiani* who can anticipate happenings of the past, present and the future—Based on "Shabdarath").

The Guru coasoled Mata Jito Ji by telling her that whoever cames to this world had invariably to die for one reason or the other. He further advised her to keep the secret to herself and remain engaged in meditation as before. Bowing before the Guru in acceptance of the inevitable, she made one last request and that was to pass away from the world before such unbearable events took place. The Guru replied that it would happen like that.

After a few months, Mata Jito Ji breathed her last while she was sitting in meditation. The Guru cremated her with his own hands at a place where Gurdwara Agampura is now located. She died like a saint in meditation, leaving the entire city of Anandpur in mourning.

THE BIG BATTLE OF ANANDPUR

The creation of the Khalsa Brotherhood, as a casteless and self-reliant society, by Guru Gobind Singh continued to be an eye-sore for the hill chieftains, particularly Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur (Bilaspur). Instead of siding with and supporting the cause of the Guru who was fighting for the protection of Hindu religion, he played into the hands of emperor Aurangzeb who was determined to convert

Hindus to Islam on a large scale and make the country an Islamic land. It had also been the emperor's policy to make the hill chieftains fight with the Guru so as to keep himself free to subdue the rebel Marathas in the south.

Having so far failed to vanquish the Guru in any encounter, Raja Bhim Chand now approached the emperor personally and incited him to attack the Guru with a strong force. The emperor raised the bogey of *jehad* (religious war) and, in addition to the regular army, called upon unenrolled fanatic Muslims also to join it. History records that a combined force of several lakh persons (Mughal soldiers, mercenaries and hill chieftains' force) surrounded the city of Anandpur and laid siege to the Anandgarh Fort in the beginning of April, 1704 A.D.

This was a difficult period in the life of Guru Gobind Singh. But he had come to the world to face such situations and overcome them. At first the Sikh soldiers used to sally out of the fort and bring back looted rations from the besieging army in order to supplement the meagre stock available with them. But in five or six months the provisions inside the fort were depleted and the Sikhs were forced to be content only with one meal. Later on, even that could not be continued and they were obliged to eat leaves and barks of trees. From the time when the hill chieftains had attacked Anandpur in 1701 A.D., the economic condition of the city had deteriorated. Now the soldiers of the besieging army went about the city and looted, whatever they liked, recklessly.

While no old revenue records of the city are available, it is estimated from the extent of ruins left over an area of one and a half to two miles towards the north east that the population of the city must have been at least one and a half lakh persons. In 1924 A.D. the author was deputed by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee to carry out a survey of the city. During the investigation he was told by a ninety years old person that the latter had, during his childhood, learnt from another old person that Anandpur had developed into a prosperous industrial town. There were nearly 400 shops of iron-smiths along the hill side

under Anandgarh Fort, opposite Shahidi Bagh. In those smithies, swords, daggers, guns, bullets, cannon balls etc. used to be manufactured. No wonder, if with such manufactured arms and ammunition, the besieged Sikhs could withstand the siege of Anandpur for over six months.

But the Mughal army had looted those shops and destroyed the economic prosperity of the city with the intention that the Guru, after being defeated and captured, might not be able to return to the place. Those, who have witnessed the holocaust of 1947 at the time of partition of India, know from their experience how much devastation takes place on such occasions. Most of the well-to-do and trading population had left the city. Only some hill people and local Muslims were left to stay on there. The few buildings, which remained undestroyed, were occupied by Mughal army officers. The rank and file were living in tents pitched all over the ruined areas and under the trees.

The imperial army, combined with hill chieftains' soldiers, had invaded Anandpur in the month of April in order to capture or kill the Sikhs who were expected to arrive there for customary Baisakhi celebrations. But their expectations were belied The siege had continued for over six months without any sign of surrender. Volleys of arrows and cannon balls were still being hurled from inside the fort, hitting the enemy targets. Now that the rains had set in, the condition of those who had laid the siege became difficult. There were dangers from mosquitoes, serpents and malaria facing them. There were no first aid or Red Cross facilities available then.

With the onset of winter matters worsened still further. The soldiers, particularly the mercenaries accompanying the Mughal army, were not prepared or equipped for those exigencies. The Sikh soldiers would come out of the fort in darkness of the night, kill the enemy and take away their rations and ammunitions. On the top of it, winter diseases like pneumonia, bronchitis and asthma had set in among the enemy ranks. The general in command of the Mughal army must have been sending his reports to emperor Aurangzeb, then in the south, but in the absence of any

further direction from him, his soldiers continued to bear unfavourable conditions resulting from the prolonged siege.

Although no authentic evidence is available, it can be assumed from the tone of the emperor's letter written directly to Guru Gobind Singh subsequently that the commander of the Mughal army must have reported to the emperor somewhat on the following lines :

"Your Majesty ! the hill chieftains seem to have misguided Hazrat (i.e. the emperor) by saying that the Guru is preparing to grab land and avenge the murder of his father and that his enhancing power and prestige should be crushed before he became too strong.

"Due to such insinuations, Anandpur was invaded by a large force. Although six months have passed, it has not been possible to defeat the Guru. He is stationed inside the fort where there are wells; hence there is no scarcity of water. We do not allow any provisions to go from outside but still the fighting is continuing. We do not know how many thousands of Sikh soldiers are still inside the fort. One of them (referring to Bhai Bachittar Singh) had earlier attacked our intoxicated elephant and wounded it, with the result that it ran amuck and trampled our own soldiers. We are stationed near the river bank and, on account of extreme cold, our soldiers are increasingly suffering from disease.

"Your Majesty, it would not have mattered if we had suffered all this loss in return for victory over some land or ruler. But what we are suffering is just for the sake of pulling down a *fakir* from his *gaddi* or so-called throne. It has not been possible to send to your Majesty a full report about the loss actually suffered as we have been communicating only estimated figures so far. Still we are not aware what we are going to gain even after achieving victory in this battle.

"Your Majesty, even if the Guru is killed in the fighting, some one else will take his place as a Guru. This system of theirs, i.e., line of guruship, is not going to stop. If, on the other hand, the Guru is captured, then which land

are we going to acquire from him ? It may not, therefore, be a wise policy to undergo all these losses in men and materials just for the sake of making it popularly known that the Guru has been captured or killed. The actual decision however, depends entirely on the sweet will of your Majesty."

Such sentiments expressed by the army commander must have upset the emperor who was already sick of the Maratha rebellion. If he had recalled his forces from Anandpur, it would have been taken as a sign of weakness. The Marathas would have also got emboldened. If he himself had dashed to the north, the south would have gone out of his hands. So the emperor found himself between the devil and the deep sea. He pondered over the problem as he was unable to take a quick decision. He found weighty arguments in the commander's report. He thought that the hill chieftains had first refused to pay tributes to him; now they want the imperial forces to fight their battle with the Guru. He smelled something fishy in this strategy of theirs.

The emperor was, no doubt, cruel but he was also very intelligent. He wrote a letter addressed directly to the Guru on the following lines and sent it through his general :

"The question of getting the Fort of Anandgarh vacated has now become a question of prestige. If you, suo-moto, vacate it and come and meet me here, then I promise, on oath of the Koran, that you will not be oppressed hereafter but given the same treatment which kings and emperors extend to elders and men of God. Because kingship has been bestowed on me by God, therefore do not act against my wishes. Once you vacate the fort, you may settle anywhere else you like."*

When the letter was delivered to the Guru, he told the Sikhs that the emperor was a crafty enemy. What he or his army could not achieve by force is sought to be achieved by swearing. It is the same emperor, who for the sake of

* It was in reply to this very letter that the Guru sent his first epistle from Machhiwara. There is a mention of Aurangzeb's letter and the Guru's reply in Macauliffe's "Sikh Religion", Part V—Tr.

grabbing the throne of Delhi, had imprisioned his father, Shahjahan, a believer and worshipper of the Koran; had killed his brothers because they had gained the sympathy of their father, and had got a saint, like Sarmad, beheaded because he believed in the omnipresence of God. The Guru, therefore, advised the Sikhs that the emperor's letter was full of deception and to accept it at its face value was to put oneself in difficulty. But, although the Five Beloved Sikhs agreed with the Guru's views, most of the other Sikhs, who were suffering acute hardships due to hunger, thought otherwise. They were of the opinion that now that the emperor was himself pleading for the vacation of the fort and a meeting with him, it would be better to accept his offer so as to maintain the prestige on both sides and at the same time settle mutual differences once for all through the meeting proposed by the emperor.

The Guru did not like to disappoint the Sikhs too much because they had been with him through thick and thin for so long. In order to satisfy them about the emperor's real intentions, he arranged for some bullocks and he-buffaloes, laden with rags, old shoes and discarded saddles and having lit-up torches tied to their horns, to move out of the fort during the night. The Mughal soldiers, as expected, jumped at what they thought to be the treasure with the intention of distributing the booty among themselves. After opening the bags they felt greatly ashamed. The Sikhs then realised the correctness of the Guru's assessment and kept mum inside the fort for some more time.

Outside the fort, the Mughal army and the hill chieftains' forces felt greatly disappointed. They had thought that the Guru and his Sikhs would, out of sheer exhaustion and pangs of hunger, submit to the invaders. They now thought of another treacherous plan to appease the Guru. The hill chieftains placed a cow made of kneaded flour and a copy of the Gita on a plate and sent it, along with a copy of the Koran similarly placed by the Mughals on another plate, to the Guru with a letter saying that what had happened was the work of a few dishonest and foolish persons who could not distinguish as to who was passing in the darkness of the night. They swore by the Gita and the

Koran and assured the Guru on their as well as the emperor's behalf, that he might vacate the fort without any fear whatsoever.

The Guru again advised the Sikhs not to take that letter and the oaths seriously and to persevere for sometime more. But some of the Sikhs could not bear the hunger any longer. The same hunger had tormented men like Maharana Partap and Mardana and about which it has been said as follows :

ਐਸੀ ਪੇਟ ਕੀ ਪਟਾਰੀ, ਲਾਈ ਕ੍ਰੂਰ ਮੁਖ ਚਾਰੀ,
ਪੂਰ ਪੂਰ ਸਭ ਹਾਰੀ, ਠਗੀ ਵਿਸ੍ਵ ਜਿਨ ਸਾਰੀ ਹੈ ।*

(The stomach given by the ugly-faced Brahma, the Creator, is such that how much you may fill it, it remains hungry and unsatisfied. It has defrauded the entire creation).

It tried to deceive Guru Nanak but he overpowered it. It was now trying to beguile Guru Gobind Singh and his Sikhs. Those of the Sikhs who could not withstand it any longer decided to go away by themselves if the Guru did not agree. The Guru did not insist and allowed them to go after they gave *bedawa* (letter of desertion), saying that they were not the Guru's Sikhs. Fortunately, they did not write that he was not their Guru. So the Guru accepted what they had written and they managed to escape through the enemy lines unharmed. This encouraged the latter in the belief that the Guru's defence and determination had weakened.

Those Sikhs who still remained inside the fort were able to convince Mata Gujri Ji about the futility of holding out, now that the enemy had sworn by the Gita and the Koran and had also allowed the deserters to go away without inflicting any harm on them. The Guru had to agree with the general concensus, particularly when Mata Gujri Ji also desired so, and decided to vacate the Fort of Anandgarh, This was done at midnight on December 20, 1704 A.D.

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* See "Vairagya Shatak" by Bhartrihari (Translated into Hindi by Kavi Hardayal). According to "Mahan Kosh", the original contains one hundred *shalokas*.

TRAVELOGUE TENTH

DEPARTURE FROM ANANDPUR

After leaving Anandgarh Fort, Guru Gobind Singh headed towards Kiratpur. Besides his four sons, nearly 500 Sikh soldiers accompanied him. When the hill chieftains and the Mughal forces learnt that the Guru had only a few Sikhs with him, they broke their pledges of the Gita and the Koran and attacked the Guru from the rear. Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Bhai Udai Singh, with whatever support they had at their disposal, held up the enemy from advancing and fought a pitched battle at Nirmoh Garh. The Guru had, in the meantime, taken the route towards Ropar and reached the bank of the Sirsa, a stormy rivulet. The enemy forces were still following him.

The weather was chilly and the Sirsa was in flood. Instead of being encircled there, the Guru decided to cross the rivulet. In doing so, many valuable manuscripts of books and several unarmed Sikhs were washed away in the flood. Some others died fighting with the enemy. Those who were captured had their noses and ears cut off by the Mughals.* It was with great difficulty that the Guru, his four sons, wife (Mata Sundri Ji) and Mata Sahib Devi (mother of the Khalsa), along with a few Sikhs, were able to cross the Sirsa. But before they could reach Ropar, some Ranghars obstructed their way and engaged them in a fight. In this state of disarray, the Guru's mother, Mata Gujri Ji, along with his two younger sons (Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh) got separated from him. They were escorted by Gangu (a *brahmin* kitchen servant of the Guru) to his village Kheri in district Ambala. Ram Kaur, a sister of Mata Jito Ji, was captured by Nawab Sher Mohd.

* cf. "The Sikh Religion" by M.A. Macauliffe, p. 70.

of Malerkotla. Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi Ji accompanied by Bhai Mani Singh, however, as directed by the Guru, reached Delhi via Hardwar, where they stayed with a relative of Bhai Mani Singh in Kucha Dilwali.

After the battle of Ropar was over, the Guru entered the city but no one offered him any lodging to stay, except the kiln where Gurdwara Bhatha Sahib now stands. The Guru, along with his two elder sons and forty Sikhs, moved from there on the evening of December 21, 1704 A.D. to Chamkaur where they encamped in a *garhi* which was not a fortress but a raised *haveli* belonging to two brothers who would let in the Guru only after he had paid them 25 gold coins.

THE BATTLE OF CHAMKAUR

After the flood waters had subsided, the enemy also crossed the Sirsa and encircled the *garhi* where the Guru had taken shelter. Though tired due to continued sleeplessness and worried on account of loss of valued literature, which he had compiled after nearly 20 years of labour, the Guru did not lose courage but planned out his strategy for yet another battle which the enemy might force on him. He sent out of the *garhi* batches of five Sikhs at a time. They fought with the enemy hordes as best as they could and laid down their lives while doing so. The Guru's eldest son, Sahibzada Ajit Singh, did not remain behind. He sought the Guru's permission to go out, along with some Sikhs, and face the enemy. The permission was granted. The Guru himself dressed him and blessed him with a pat on the shoulder. He dashed out of the *garhi* on a horseback, along with five Sikhs, including Bhai Mohkam Singh, one of the Five Beloved Ones. They fought bravely against heavy odds and, after inflicting severe losses in enemy ranks, met their end on the battle field.

The Guru's second son, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, when informed of the martyrdom attained by his elder brother, was equally inspired to join the crusade. Seeing his courage and determination, inspite of his young age, the Guru himself dressed him in battle attire and sent him out with his

blessings, along with five Sikhs. Raising loud slogans of 'Sat Sri Akal', they fell on the enemy, creating bewilderment in their ranks. But being out-numbered, their resistance could not last long and they fell fighting.

The Guru watched from the *garhi* the marvellous courage and fearlessness exhibited by his two sons in the battle, with great satisfaction and admiration. In his heart he thanked God Almighty for enabling him to fulfil, uptil then, the trust imposed in him at the time of his coming to the world. The whole episode of the battle of Chamkaur and the martyrdom of the two elder sons of Guru Gobind Singh have been described vividly and with great emotion by Yogi Allah Yar Khan* and Sardar Amar Singh** in their memorable poems.

By then darkness had set in. The Mughals thought that because they had killed the two elder sons of the Guru and also because most of the Sikhs accompanying him had also fallen in the battle, it would be easy to capture him alive or kill him in one swoop on the following morning, leaving no avenue for him to escape. Therefore, they assembled around the *garhi* and encircled it more closely during the night.

The Guru had then only five Sikhs left with him. He called them together and revealed to them his decision to enter the battle alone in the morning and die fighting after giving the enemy the taste of his sword to the maximum extent possible. Only after watching his actions should they enter the fray and attain martyrdom. This created consternation among the Sikhs, who after mutual consultation among themselves, approached the Guru with the following request :

"O Master of Khalsa Brotherhood ! Your actions are unique and unfathomable. You had said that you had come to the world to see the world's *tamasha*. You have seen it now in the dismemberment of your own house in the cause of righteousness. You have also taught us how to attain salvation through martyrdom. But it will not be possible for us to tolerate that you become martyr before our own

* "Ganj-i-Shahidan" by Yogi Allah Yar Khan.
** "Sher-i-Punjab" (Special Number).

eyes and we continue to remain alive after you. On the other hand, if you remain after us you will be able to create many more Sikhs like us. So our request is that before the day dawns you somehow manage to escape from the *garhi*, as a trust of the Khalsa".

The Guru flatly refused to accept this proposal. He was not at all prepared to stand the inevitable charge that he had got his sons and thousands of Sikhs killed but had himself escaped from the jaws of death. He told them : "This body has to perish one day or the other. It is better to die fighting as such an opportunity comes rarely and that too to fortunate persons. I cannot afford to lose this opportunity."

This reply silenced the Sikhs but their consternation remained. They could not withstand the scene of the Guru's end coming in their presence. They thought of Guru Angad Dev's following verse and prayed for guidance :

"ਜਿਸੁ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਸਿਉ ਨੇਹੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਆਗੇ ਮਰ ਚਲੀਐ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 83)

(It is better to predecease your beloved).

Soon, a solution occurred to one of them like a lightening. He thought the Guru had himself declared the Khalsa as his Guru. He had himself sought the nectar of Amrit from five of them at the time of the baptismal ceremony. They were five of them present there. So they could act collectively as the Guru and command Guru Gobind Singh to accept their proposal. He revealed the solution to the other Sikhs also and all of them passed a resolution to that effect. Then they addressed the Guru again in the following words :

"Guru Gobind Singh Jeo, you have made us submit to every order of yours as a Guru, but today we command you as Guru Khalsa to move out of the *garhi* in the short time still available before daybreak and proceed to a safer place in order to provide guidance to your Sikhs for some more time. Kindly tell us what your response to this command is."

The Guru realised the strength in the argument of the Sikhs for it was based on his own teachings. The Guru replied : "Your request or proposal is not acceptable but your command cannot be refused. You may act in what-

ever manner you like". As a sign of joy, the Sikhs shouted full-throated slogans "Jo Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal" five times. When the Mughal soldiers outside heard those loud slogans, they thought that there were still many Sikh soldiers inside the *garhi*. So those who were camping very close to the *garhi* stepped back to avoid any lightening attack directed from inside the *garhi*.

The Guru had only one emblem of guruship still left with him. That was the precious plume stuck on his headgear. He found the features of a Sikh, Bhai Sant Singh, resembling his own. So he put the plume on his headgear in order to show to the enemy that he was the Guru.* The Guru then circled the five Sikhs and transferred physical guruship to the Khalsa in the customary manner. He also advised them that his spirit will thenceforward rest in *gurbani*.

Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh were seated on the two corners of the *garhi* to impress on the enemy that the place was still occupied. Then, finding that the front side of the *garhi* was heavily guarded, the Guru, along with the remaining three Sikhs (Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Man Singh), moved out from the backside when it was pitch dark. It is said that while moving out the Guru clapped thrice and cried aloud that the Pir of Hindus was going away; let any one intercept him if he could. That cry itself unnerved the enemy forces which ran forward and backward in darkness, trampling and killing their own soldiers having beards on their faces. Meanwhile, the Guru and the three Sikhs had gone out of immediate reach of the enemy. The Guru had advised the Sikhs that if they happened to get separated from him, they should follow the direction of a particular star to be able to meet him again. With day breaking out and finding themselves helpless, the enemy made a furious attack on the *garhi* only to find that the Guru had escaped undetected. The two Sikhs left there fought bravely but were overpowered and

* Some writers are of the opinion that it was on Bhai Sangat Singh's headgear that the plume was fixed. This is, however, immaterial—Tr.

ultimately killed. This happened on the morning of December 23, 1704 A.D. Verily, it was a turning point in Sikh history.

IN MACHHIWARA JUNGLE

At the time of leaving Chamkaur, the Guru carried on his body his usual steel arms and a musket on his shoulder in order to meet any individual or group attack on the way. He had also with him some memorable arms of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur and grandfather, Guru Hargobind, which he prized most. Walking swifty in darkness through marshy and thorny terrain he got his garments torn, legs bruised and feet swollen. But the undaunted son of Guru Tegh Bahadur bore all this in obedience to the Divine Will.

After walking for three miles at a stretch, he reached village Rahampura where two *gujjars* (Alfoo and Gamoo) recognised him and raised an alarm. The Guru gave them some gold coins and silenced them. But they again started shouting at which the Guru had to give them some fist blows which paralysed their faces. Some writers have stated that they were killed on the spot. But this seems doubtful as it would have at once created a sensation in the village, thus endangering the safety of the Guru himself. Striding further on, the Guru had his shoes stuck in a swamp. He had to stop under a *jand* tree and clean the shoes and his feet. A temple called Gurdwara Jand Sahib is located at that place. After traversing some further distance, he reached Bahlol village where he had an acquaintance, named Nagina Mal. He called him but when the latter saw the Guru in a forlorn condition, he preferred not to keep him there but escorted him through a bushy jungle upto a place from where Machhiwara was only three miles away. That distance the Guru footed out alone. When he reached Machhiwara, which is 12 miles away from Chamkaur, the Guru felt extremely tired and rested near a Persian well located in the midst of a thick jungle. He quenched his thirst by drinking water from one of the earthen vases of that well and fell asleep on the bare damp ground. What a comparison with the grandeur of life at Anandpur and what an irony of fate !

When the day dawned, the golden rays of the rising sun started piercing through the thickets and caressing the Guru's face. On waking up he thought of his two dear Sikhs, Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh whom he had left behind in the *garhi* at Chamkaur. They must have by then, he presumed, become martyrs while fighting with the enemy inside the *garhi*. He felt as if their souls were ascending to heavens. The poet in him expressed the following thought intending to convey a message to the Divine Lord through the elevated souls of those two Sikhs :—

"ਮਿੱਤ੍ਰ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲ ਮੁਰੀਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ॥
ਤੁਧ ਬਿਨ ਰੋਗ ਰਜਾਈਆਂ ਦਾ ਓੱਢਣ ਨਾਗ ਨਿਵਾਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਣਾ ॥
ਸੂਲ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ ਖੰਜਰ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਬਿੰਗ ਕਸਾਈਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਹਿਣਾ ॥
ਯਾਰੜੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੱਥਰ ਚੰਗਾ ਭੱਠ ਖੇੜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ ॥"

(ਖ਼ਿਆਲ ਪਾ: 10)

(Convey, O dear ones, the disciple's message to his beloved Master !

Without Him, life is like a torturing sickness with stings of snakebiting. The goblet pierces like a lance and the cup strikes like a dagger. One feels like a goat about to be butchered with its extemities blocked. But I prefer to stay with my beloved Lord on bare hard ground, for accursed is one's living in luxury with those whom one loves not).

How great is Guru Gobind Singh who, even in dire circumstances, addressed his Lord as a friend, as a beloved, in obedience to whose Divine Will he was ever content ! History records that when Ibrahim was about to sacrifice his son he closed his eyes to avoid pain and anguish. Here was Guru Gobind Singh who gladly sacrificed his two sons in the battle field before his own eyes, without an iota of pain on his face. He willingly gave up the resplendent life of Anandpur and preferred to treck barefooted alone in pursuance of the Divine call. Any other lesser soul would have shed tears and cried aloud on such a turn of events. Even Lord Rama wept when his beloved wife, Sita, and brother, Lakshman, got separated from him. But Guru Gobind Singh, instead of weeping or complaining to the Lord, thanked Him for having worked His Will through him, his sons and his Sikhs to His entire satisfaction.

Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Man Singh, who had got separated from the Guru during the night, were now in search of him. Following the direction indicated by the Guru, they reached a place closeby to the Guru in Machhiwara jungle and on hearing his voice singing the Divine song, (Khayal Pat. 10) quoted on prepage, they soon presented themselves at his feet. They found him lying on bare ground with blood oozing from the soles of his feet and legs bruised all over. Unable to bear this condition of their beloved Guru, they requested him to shift to the house of Gulaba *massand* who lived in Machhiwara village. At first the Guru expressed his physical inability to move about but later on agreed to be carried over the shoulders of Bhai Man Singh upto the house of Gulaba. It seemed that the Guru knew his missionaries well and also the topography of Machhiwara where he had occasionally come out for hunting.

By now the Mughal forces at Chamkaur had realised that the real Guru had escaped and that the Sikh (Bhai Sant Singh, with plume on his head) was the Guru's impersonation. The hill chieftains, thinking that the Guru had escaped alone and will be captured sooner or later, gave up the siege of Chamkaur and returned, along with their soldiers, to their hill capitals. But the Mughal forces, still ten thousand strong, fanned out in groups in search of the Guru. It was only for one night that the Guru stayed in the house of Gulaba. He and his brother, Panjaba, both served the Guru well. Their sister, Hardai, was also a devoted lady who used to spin *khadi* garments for the Guru and take them to Anandpur every year. She was greatly pleased to see the Guru in their midst. But when the news spread that the Mughal forces were on the track and were approaching Machhiwara, all were terrified. They offered whatever they could to the Guru and bade him farewell.

NABI KHAN AND GHANI KHAN

These were two Pathan brothers who lived at a short distance towards the south of Gulaba's house. They were dealers in horses and had served the Guru at Anandpur for

some time. They came to meet the Guru in Gulaba's house and their hearts melted on seeing him in that condition. They also informed the Guru about the Mughal forces following him and requested him to shift to their house instead of staying in the house of any Hindu or Sikh disciple where detection would be easy. On hearing this, the Guru smiled. Bhai Daya Singh enquired of the Guru as to the reason for his smiling. The Guru said :

"I had vacated the *garhi* at Chamkaur on the behest of five Sikhs whose command in the shape of Guru could not be refused. Now how long can I keep myself hiding ? I would prefer to die fighting in the open. All were stunned to hear this reply. They fell at the Guru's feet and appealed to him to agree to shift to a safer place as the purpose for which he had been pursuaded to leave Chamkaur had not yet been achieved. So, for the time being, it was agreed that the Guru would shift to the Pathan brothers' house where Mughal forces would not be able to locate him easily.* It was during this short stay at a comparatively safer place that the Guru thought of writing a letter to emperor Aurangzeb to inform him about the behaviour of his generals and the false oaths taken by his religious and treacherous minions. He called for pen and paper and wrote out a letter in Persian verse, entitled 'Nameh Guru Gobind Singh Ba Aurangzeb', on December 24, 1704 A.D. He asked one of the two Pathan brothers to call Sayyad Inayat Ali who lived only two miles away from their place and who had taught Persian to the Guru at Anandpur. The Sayyad did turn up on the following day and, after hearing from the Guru as to what had happened, wept bitterly. The Guru consoled him and seated him close to himself. But the Sayyad was so much over-whelmed that he cursed those who had behaved in such a manner after taking oaths on the Koran.

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* Bhai Santokh Singh has not mentioned this in "Suraj Prakash". But the author has by personal visit to Machhiwara got it verified on the basis of local evidence that the Guru did shift to the house of Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan and stayed there for only two nights—Tr.

The Guru then mentioned to the Sayyad about the letter that he had written to emperor Aurangzeb and also discussed with him the proposal to move out of the place, along with the Sikhs, as a muslim Pir, seated on a charpoy. Both the Sayyad and the Sikhs advised him against this plan. Instead, it was decided that the Sikhs should move out first and only if they found no danger on the way, the Guru would be escorted by the Pathan brothers as 'Uch Ka Pir'. Then, at a suitable predetermined place, the Sikhs would meet the Guru. This plan was considered more suitable from the point of view of strategy needed at that time.

The Guru also gave the letter to Sayyad Inayat Ali for keeping it in safe custody, lest it might be detected in the remote event of his being captured. He also asked him to move about among the Mughal contigents and inform him about their plans and the directions from which they were advancing.

TRAVELOGUE ELEVENTH

AS 'UCH KA PIR'

The second fortnight of December, 1704 A.D. was the most difficult and critical period in the life of Guru Gobind Singh. It was during that period that forty Majhail Sikhs had deserted the Guru, the city of Anandpur had to be vacated, the Sirsa flood waters had wrought havoc, the Guru's family had got separated, the two elder sons of the Guru had died fighting before his own eyes, and the Guru himself had to escape from Chamkaur towards Machhiwara in forlorn condition. Even at Machhiwara he was surrounded by enemy forces from all sides as they were out to capture him alive. His escape out of such a serious situation on the night of December 25 and 26 was a masterpiece of strategy and nothing short of a miracle. It all happened like this :

The Guru had seen the two Pathan brothers, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan, dressed in blue clothes, as Hajis (those who go to Mecca on pilgrimage) generally do. The Guru planned to don similarly dyed clothes. He had already received two sets of clothes from Gulaba's sister, Hardai. Gulaba had also presented to the Guru a ten yards long piece of cloth as a *reza*. He asked Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan to have that cloth sewn into a cotton shawl and two long shirts, all dyed in blue colour, immediately. That was done accordingly.

When the Guru had called his erstwhile teacher, Sayyad Inayat Ali, from the latter's village and entrusted to him the letter addressed to emperor Aurangzeb for safe custody, he had disclosed to him his plan to move out of Machhiwara in the garb of 'Uch Ka Pir' (Pir-e-Buland). As decided by common consent, instead of the Guru it was Bhai Daya

Singh, dressed in blue, with his hair let loose on his shoulders and wearing a blue cotton shawl around his body, who was seated on a cot which had peacock feathers tied to its four legs to indicate that it was carrying a holy person. The cot was lifted by Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan on one side and by Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Man Singh on the other. It was evening when they set out towards Samrala in the southern direction. They had hardly gone one and a half mile when a mobile military patrol stopped them. On inquiry, the Pathan brothers told the patrol leader that they were carrying their Pir who had returned from pilgrimage and who was then moving about at his sweet will to bless his disciples. The soldiers reported the matter to the military commander who ordered the entire party to be detained in a house, pending full investigation.

On the following day, when the party was presented before the commander, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan repeated their earlier contention that they were carrying their 'Uch Ka Pir'. But the commander was not satisfied and the party was put under strict guard. By then the news had spread in all surrounding military camps that some bearded persons, looking like Sikhs and clad in blue clothes, had been arrested and will be released or detained further after verifying their antecedents. Sayyad Inayat Ali, who was staying with a disciple soldier in one of the camps, heard this news and told the camp incharge that he had met the suspected person. He was not Guru Gobind Singh but was really 'Uch Ka Pir' and that it was a sin to hold up such a pious person.

This massage was conveyed immediately to the military commander whose name is recorded as Daler Khan, Garh Shankria. He enquired from the 'Uch Ka Pir', through a special messenger, as to whether he could cite any witness in defence and whether he knew any Sayyad whose word could be believed. The 'Uch Ka Pir'* replied that he knew one Sayyad Inayat Ali of Nurpur village nearby, who had met him recently. He had told him that he was staying with

* Bhai Daya Singh, who was posing as 'Uch Ka Pir', was also called Nilambri on account of his blue dress.

one of his disciples in a military camp in Machhiwara and as such he could be contacted there immediately. The commander sent a fast horse rider to bring the Sayyad, while it was still dark, as he did not want to incur the displeasure of the Pir by his continued detention. The Sayyad replied back that being old and it being very cold outside he would meet the commander on the following morning. With the departure of the horse rider, the soldiers as well as the camp incharge fell asleep as they thought there was nothing to worry when the suspects were in custody. During the night food was surved to the 'Uch Ka Pir' and his companions who took it after doing *karad-bhet* (touching it with their small sword)*.

As planned, the Sayyad stealthily moved out of the camp and went post-haste to the house of Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan where Guru Gobind Singh was staying, waiting for developments. The Sayyad apprised the Guru of his talk with the commander's special messenger and the arrest of Bhai Daya Singh and the other two Sikhs. He also informed the Guru of the distances and directions of the camps and advised him to immediately slip out while it was still dark. Accordingly, both the Guru and Sayyad Inayat Ali went out in darkness in the direction of Ghulal village by some circuitous route so as to avoid detection. It is possible they might have made use of a country boat to cross the backwater channel of the river Sutlej which flows near Machhiwara. At a safe distance, where there were thick bushes, the Sayyad requested the Guru to stay secretly in the hutment of one of his disciples and himself returned to his Machhiwara camp to be available to meet the commander after the day had dawned.

As expected, the horse rider came again in the morning to the camp and, with great respect, requested the Sayyad to accompany him to the commander. The latter also behaved respectfully towards the Sayyad and spoke to him as follows :

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* At the place where the military commander's camp was located and where the 'Uch Ka Pir' took food served at the commander's behest, after applying *karad-bhet*, there now stands a Gurdwara, called "Kirpan Bhet Gurdwara".

"Sayyad Sahib ! You are a highly celebrated intellectual and are known among the faithful as a Sayyad Pir. During the preceding night we have detained some persons with long hair and beards on the suspicion that one of them is Guru Gobind Singh (who as you know is a rebel) and the other two are his Sikhs. If you happen to know them, kindly remove our doubt as the question of our faith, i.e. Islam, is involved."

Saying this, the commander took the Sayyad to the house in which 'Uch Ka Pir' was confined. On seeing the 'Pir' the Sayyad bowed and accosted him with the Muslim greeting "Islam-al-Lekam". He assured the commander that he was not Guru Gobind Singh but was really 'Uch Ka Pir'. He further told him that by detaining such a holy person great sin had been committed which could be washed away only by apologising immediately from the Pir.

The commander was unnerved. He brought the Sayyad to his camp and, after mutual consultation, both went back to the Pir with Rupees five hundred as present and sincere apologies for having detained him on suspicion. The commander told the Pir that he was free to move about wherever he liked.

The Pathan brothers and the two Sikhs again lifted the cot carrying the Pir and moved out of Machhiwara. Adopting zig-zag paths, they were soon out of sight of military patrols. At a predetermined place, Sayyad Inayat Ali also met them and took them to the hut where Guru Gobind Singh was staying. Here Bhai Daya Singh came down from the cot and his place was taken by Guru Gobind Singh as 'Uch Ka Pir'. The whole party then reached Ghulal village where they rested for a while and where there is now a gurdwara called Manji Sahib (Damdama Sahib). Although Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan advised against too long a stay in that well-populated village, the Guru said that he had to collect certain articles held in trust from a blacksmith, named Jhanda. The blacksmith was sent for. At first he could not recognise the Guru as he was dressed in blue clothes. But when the Guru reminded him of his promise to deliver two swords, twenty one arrows and two bows, he at

once recollected his commitment and brought those articles from his house. The Guru blessed Jhanda and then moved out of Ghulal.*

It was at Ghulal that the letter which Guru Gobind Singh had given to Sayyad Inayat Ali for safe custody was delivered back to the Guru. The Guru gave the Sayyad a letter of appreciation for the service rendered by him in difficult time. It was from Ghulal or from the next stop that the letter was sent to emperor Aurangzeb, then camping in the Deccan, through Bhai Daya Singh.** The contents of this Persian letter, as translated in English, reads as follows :

*NAMEH GURU GOBIND SINGH BA AURANGZEB****

(Letter from Guru Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb)

1. In the name of the Lord of Sword and Axe.
   In the name of the Lord of Arrow and Shield.
2. In the name of the Lord of Men of Heroic Deeds.
   In the name of the Lord of Speeding Steeds.
3. He, who has given you kingship, has entrusted to me the task of defending Dharma and Righteousness.
4. Your frantic activities are confined to deceipt and diplomacy, whereas my efforts are based on faith and truth.
5. The name of Aurangzeb hardly behoves you, for kings should not indulge in deceiving others.
6. Your rosary is nothing more than collection of beads and thread. You are employing the beads as a snare and the thread as a net to enslave others.

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* This story was told to the author when he went to Ghulal village for checking up events personally.—Tr.

** ch. "Sadha Itehas" by Principal Satbir Singh, (First Edition, p. 377).

*** See "Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr. Ganda Singh, to know more about the source and availability of this important letter.

7. You kneaded the earthly remains of your father with evil deeds and the blood of your brothers.
8. And with that mud you built your house to live in.
9. I will now storm you like rain water and deal with you with sharp edges of steel arms.
10. You have met with failure in the Deccan and are coming back thirsty from Mewar.
11. If you now turn your eyes to this side (i.e., the north) then you will have your thirst and parched throat set right.
12. I will place fire under your feet and will not allow you to drink water of the Punjab.
13. What if the sly fox has killed, under deception, two cubs of a lion.
14. The lion itself is alive and is sure to wreak vengeance.
15. I do not now ask you for anything in the name of your Allah and your Scripture.
16. I have no faith in your word; only the sword will now serve the purpose.
17. Even if you claim to be a clever leopard, I will see that the lion remains outside your net.
18. If even you have a talk with me, I will show you the path which is pious and straight.
19. Let the armies on both sides draw up opposite to each other.
20. And let there be a distance of three miles between them.
21. Then I will come alone and you may come along with horsemen.
22. You have eaten fruits and enjoyed unusual gifts but have never met warriors personally.
23. Come forward yourself armed with sword and axe for a duel and not kill innocent people of God's creation.

This letter clearly shows that it was written from Machhiwara after the battle of Chamkaur and after the

Guru had sacrificed his two elder sons in the battle field.* It also shows that even after suffering heavy losses in men and materials, the Guru was not in any way feeling vanquished but was full of confidence, faith and courage to chastise and reprimand the emperor for his deceitful and diabolic activities.

GURU GOBIND SINGH IN DINA

Over a month had elapsed after leaving Anandpur when Guru Gobind Singh reached Dina. In this town lived three brothers, named Shamir, Lakhmir and Takhat Mal whose grandfather, Jodha, had fought on the side of Guru Hargobind, the Guru's grandfather, in the battle against Lalhon Beg. The Guru knew that those brothers were living in Dina, so he sent a word to them about his arrival. They all came, along with other members of their family, two miles out of the town to receive the Guru in advance. They thought themselves to be fortunate to welcome and host the Guru. But the Guru declined to stay with them as the Mughal forces were still pursuing him and he did not like to put them to any trouble. The three brothers, however, were sincerely eager to serve the Guru as their guest and offered to fight with the Mughal forces, on the side of the Guru, if need be. Thereupon, the Guru relented and agreed to stay as their guest in a *pucca* house belonging to a carpenter, all other houses there being *kacha*.

The people of that area were known for their daredevilry. On hearing about the Guru's presence in their midst, they came in groups and offered their services, along with clothes, horses and arms. The Guru started fresh recruitment of soldiers from Dina.

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* *Note* : This letter was first of all published in Nagri Parcharni Patrika, Banaras. Then it was reproduced in "Makhz-e-Tawarikh-e-Sikhan" by Khalsa College, Amritsar and by Dr. Ganda Singh in his book "Sikh Itehas Bare". In the Panjabi newspapers it first of all appeared in "Khalsa Samachar" of July 16, 1942. Then in 1944, Sardar Kapur Singh, I.C.S. published it in Urdu Ajit of Lahore, under the heading "Fateh Nama".

From a nearby village, called Rupa, a veteran Sikh, named Bhai Rupa, along with his two sons, Bhai Param Chand and Bhai Dharam Chand, came to pay their homage to the Guru. Bhai Rupa's father, Bhai Sidhu, had served Guru Hargobind who had laid the foundation of Rupa village after the name of Bhai Sidhu's son. They had been going to Anandpur regularly and had seen the glory of the Guru's court there. But when they now saw the Guru bereft of royal paraphernalia, they wept bitterly and could not control themselves. The Guru consoled them and advised them to abide by the supreme Will of God. They, however, expressed their feelings as follows :

"Sahib Jeo ! We cannot forget that scene when Sahibzada Jujhar Singh would sit on your lap but Sahibzada Fateh Singh, being the youngest, would claim that place and you would lovingly take both of them in your arms. How beautiful they looked with smart dresses on their bodies and small daggers and swords dangling by their sides ! But the cruel and merciless rulers have put an end to their precious lives. You had once told us that you were servant of God and had come to see the world's drama. You have seen it now and tolerated it. But when we compare this scene with the grandeur of your court in Anandpur and top-class poetical symposia which used to be held there, we are unable to bear the tragedy that has befallen."

Bhai Param Chand and Bhai Dharam Chand brought a new set of clothes and a beautiful horse, with saddle and other trappings, for the Guru. The latter accepted them and put on the new dress after lapse of several days. The two brothers expressed their desire to be baptised, which the Guru did with his own hands, and named them Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh, respectively. They also brought food for the Guru from their home and served meals to the entire congregation. Bhai Rupa then returned to his village but his sons, Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh, remained in the service of the Guru. They were the predecessors of the well-known Bagrain family who enjoyed great respect among the Sikh States later on.

SHAMIRA ACHIEVES SALVATION

Shamira performed the duty of a chowkidar outside the house in Dina where the Guru was staying. He would not let anyone in without proper inquiries, particularly when the visitors were new. This service had greatly pleased the Guru who stayed in Dina for 21 days. He wanted to bless Shamira by granting any request he might make. One day when the Guru was taking his meals, Shamira requested for *prasad.** The Guru gave him the *thal* containing whatever food was left and asked him to go and eat it. But Shamira thought of sharing the *prasad* with other members of his family also. He took the food home and asked everyone there to partake it. Among them was his maternal uncle who was a follower of Sakhi Sarwar.** He declined to take that food and also persuaded Shamira not to do so. Shamira went and buried the entire food outside in the ground.

Next morning when he came to see the Guru, he narrated truly as to what had happened. The Guru said to him, "That foolish uncle of yours has kept you devoid of the blessing. Now the land of this area, where the food is buried, will yield abundant crops. Already once Raja Bhadar Sain of this area had shown disrespect to such food with the result that two rivulets Bhatle (flowing near Bhatinda) and Chitra (flowing near Ferozepur) had dried up. You would have been rulers but now you will have to live as subjects. My Sikhs will rule in Malwa and will be called Malvais."*** The Guru had made this prophesy towards

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* Small portion of food offered to a deity or a holy person.

** Sultan Sakhi Sarwar was a Mohammadan saint whose real name was Sayyad Ahmed. His father had come from Baghdad and settled in Sialkot in 1220 A.D. The Sultan's grave is located in village Nigaha in Dera Ghazi Khan district of Pakistan. A big sweet *roti* is generally offered at this grave. Some Hindus of West Pakistan were also followers of Sakhi Sarwar. (See "Mahan Kosh" for more details)—Tr.

*** cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ritu 6, Ansu 56).

the end of February 1705 A.D. It came out to be true during the British days when canals were dug in Malwa. Now, with Bhakra canals flowing in the countryside, Malwa has become a very productive area.

DAYALPURI MAHANT FORGIVEN

Dayalpuri Mahant of Sirhind, who was a follower of Sitapuri, *sanyasi* sadhu of Dina, came to see the Guru. After expressing remorse at the atrocities perpetrated by the Governor of Sirhind, he requested the Guru to save him and his numerous followers living in Sirhind from the curse which the Guru had uttered about that town. The Guru appreciated his humility and advised him to go back to Sirhind and sound a conch-shell from his house top. The areas upto which that sound was heard would be saved, but the rest of the town will be destroyed by his Khalsa. The Mahant did accordingly and thus saved himself and his followers.*

The news spread by the Mahant was bound to be heard and taken note of by Wazid Khan, the Governor of Sirhind. He also came to know that Guru Gobind Singh had taken shelter in Dina in the house of Shamir brothers. He sent a strongly-worded letter to Shamir and his brothers and reprimanded them for sheltering a rebel. He wanted them to immediately surrender the Guru to royal custody, otherwise all of them would be arrested and awarded severe punishment. The Shamir brothers boldly wrote back as follows :

"Guru Gobind Singh is our Pir who has graciously come to us. How can we disown one from whom we seek salvation ? What would be your attitude if your Pir comes to you" ?

Simultaneously, a reliable person was sent to Sirhind to bring the news in advance in case the Governor decided to send the Mughal forces to Dina. Meanwhile, the Guru continued to stay on in Dina.

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* It is said that later on when Baba Banda Singh Bahadur razed Sirhind to the ground and killed its governor, Wazid Khan, one mohalla (bazar) was saved. It is still in existence, (cf. "Suraj Prakash"—Ritu 6, Ansu 57).

ZAFAR NAMA (THE EPISTLE OF VICTORY SENT TO AURANGZEB)

It was now over three months since the Guru had arrived in Dina. Bhai Daya Singh had taken the first letter addressed to Aurangzeb from Ghulal on December 26, 1704 A.D. Now it was March 1705 A.D. These dates appear to be reasonably correct as it must have taken Bhai Daya Singh nearly two and a half months to travel from Ghulal to Aurangabad and back to Dina, a distance of nearly 900 miles, on foot or on horseback. By that time Bhai Daya Singh had reached Aurangabad in the Deccan and delivered the first letter to Aurangzeb. The emperor had also by then received a report from the Governor of Sirhind to the effect that Guru Gobind Singh and his family had been uprooted. Although there were basic differences between the Guru's letter and the Governor's report, the emperor felt that great injustice had been done to the Guru, particularly when he was promised safe passage from Anandpur on solemn oaths of the Koran.

The emperor assured Bhai Daya Singh, with repeated oaths of the Koran, that he would do justice and that the Guru may be requested to come and meet him in the Deccan. Bhai Daya Singh shrewdly replied that, if that was the emperor's intention, he might like to send a written reply to the Guru so that the verbal as well as the written messages might have greater and immediate effect. The emperor agreed to do so and deputed two messengers to accompany Bhai Daya Singh to Dina to deliver his reply to the Guru.

The Guru made suitable arrangements for the messengers' stay and heard from them as well as from Bhai Daya Singh seperately about the sympathetic and remorseful mood in which the emperor had written the reply. However, there was mixed feeling of magnanimity and seriousness on the Guru's face as he thought the emperor was not yet fully satisfied about his grievances. He, therefore, decided to send another and detailed letter to the emperor in which he neither promised nor refused to go to the Deccan to meet him. This letter, called "Zafar Nama"

(The Epistle of Victory) was written in Persian verse and sent from Dina in 1705 A.D. through two Sikhs, Bhai Daya and Bhai Dharam Singh of Agra. It was intentionally not entrusted to the emperor's messengers because of the nature of its contents and also because the Guru wanted to know the emperor's immediate reaction on reading it from his own confidant Sikhs.

The following is the English translation of Zafar Nama, with brief comments wherever necessary :—

ZAFAR NAMA

1. That God who is master of all powers and who is resolute, merciful and dispenser of food, happiness and salvation.
2. He is the protector and forgiver and is attractive.
3. He is king of kings. He dispenses virtues, gives guidance and is peerless and without form.
4. He grants heaven's blessings on those who do not possess any wealth, armies and property.
5. He is divine, omnipotent and omnipresent.
6. He is bountiful and sustainer of all.
7. He is lord of countries, greatest of all, most beautiful and merciful.
8. He is treasure of wisdom, protector of the lowly and chastiser of the wicked.
9. He is protector of dharma (righteousness), worthy of praise and connoisseur of reality and religious scriptures.
10. He is master of unshakeable intelligence, one who understands stark realities.
11. He is storehouse of knowledge, Lord of the universe and judge of worldly behaviour, full of wisdom.
12. He is the doer of all big deeds of the world and is conversant with the knowledge of the great.

DASTAN (REAL STORY)

13. I do not have any faith now in your oaths; the one Lord Creator is my sole witness. (This statement must

have been prompted by a possible report from the Governor of Sirhind that the Guru was a disloyal rebel who does not care for imperial orders. Only when the emperor had given indication of non-agreement with the complete version of the Guru (as given in the first letter) that the Guru thought it fit to call God as his sole witness).

14. I have no confidence in any of your vows; your Bakhshi Dewans (Ministers) are also liars.
15. Whoever believes in your oaths on the Koran is ultimately disillusioned.
16. But those who come under the shadow of *huma** cannot be harmed by the clever crow.
17. Those who take shelter with the lion cannot be caught by goats, sheep and deer.
18. If I too had taken false oaths, I would never have vacated the Anandgarh Fort in the hills.
19. What could the hungry forty persons do when they were suddenly attacked by ten lakh invaders ?
20. Those violators of solemn oaths came with great speed and started firing.

    (Obviously, this had reference to the siege of Chamkaur and was in rebuttal of a possible mis-statement in the Governor's report that the Guru's soldiers had attacked the Mughal forces first).
21. Then, under provocation and sheer helplessness, I had to jump into the battle and use arrows and gunfire in defence.
22. When all methods of persuation fail, it is justified to unsheathe the sword.
23. You tell me how can I now reply on oaths of the Koran. Had I not done so earlier, things would not have come to this pass.
24. I did not know that you will act like a wily fox, otherwise nothing could have compelled me to leave Anand-

*'Huma' is an imaginary bird which remains flying in sky. Its shadow is considered to be auspicious. ("Mahan Kosh")—Tr.

garh Fort and adopt the present path.*

25. No one, who had relied on your oaths of the Koran, should have been arrested or killed.

26. But the Mughal forces, clad in black clothes, came like swarms of flies and started shouting.

27. At that time, whoever was outside the shelter of the wall (of the *garhi*) was instantly killed by my arrows.

28. Then no one came outside that shelter and met his end.

29. When I saw Nahar Khan in the battle field, I gave him a taste of my arrow, without any loss of time.

30. Ultimately, the Pathan braggarts fled from the field.

31. Then one more Pathan entered the battle with the speed of a bullet.

32. He led many attacks, some intelligently and others foolishly.

33. He received several wounds and after killing those two (refering to the two elder sons of the Guru), he himself lay dead.

34. But that cursed commander of the Mughal forces did not give up the shelter of the wall.

35. Alas ! If I had seen his face, I would have condescended to send one of my arrows after him to put him to eternal sleep.

36. In the end, with arrows and gunfirings, brave soldiers died on both sides.

37. There was so much of bloodshed that the ground looked like a field of red poppy flowers.

38. Heaps of heads and feet were piled up to such an extent that they looked like balls on the play-ground.

39. The arrows and gunshots had caused bewailings all round.

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* Dr. Francis Bernier who remained in Aurangzeb's court for eight years has written in his travelogue that Aurangzeb was known for keeping his secrets and was past-master in the art of treachery and deceit. (Reproduced in the "Tej" of June 15, 1969).

40. Dhrohi arrows caused such havoc that even stalwarts among the soldiers lost their senses.

41. At such a time what could the bravery of forty persons do when swarms of enemy forces pounced on them ?

42. Then, in such circumstances when the light of day (virtue) disappears and the darkness of night (evil) prevails,

43. If any one puts his faith on the oaths taken on the Koran and comes out, he is protected and guided by God Himself.

44. I came out unharmed through ferocious enemy hordes, with the grace and kindness of the Merciful Lord.
(These lines confirm the view that it was Bhai Daya Singh who was arrested as 'Uch Ka Pir' in Machhiwara and not Guru Gobind Singh).

45. I did not know that you are a breaker of promises, a lover of wealth and one who is devoid of true faith in God.

46. You are not steadfast in your faith; you have neither the real knowledge or God, nor have you any faith in your prophet, Mohammad.

47. A truly faithful person would never swerve from his promise.

48. No one can put any reliance on such a (deceitful) person. For him what meaning has the oath on the Koran and even Allah Himself ?

49. Even if you take oath on the Koran one hundred times now, I will not have an iota of faith in you.

50. If you had believed what you were told (by me) you would have come before me right now.

51. A serious responsibility rests on your shoulders; you have written on oath that you will do justice to me.

52. If you come face to face with me, the whole reality will be known.

53. It is your responsibility to fulfil the promise made by you in writing.

54. Your verbal as well as written messages have reached me. It is now for you to act on them by redeeming your promise of doing justice.

55. Man should be true to his words. He should not think in one way and act the other way.

56. I will not go outside the limits of what your Kazi (messenger) has told me, provided you also come on the right path.

(This shows that the Kazi, who brought the emperor's message, also placed some limitation on the Guru's activities).

57. If you need the proof of your oath on the Koran, already given to me, I can send it to you.

58. If you come to Kangar Des, then we can meet face to face with each other.

59. You will have nothing to fear from this side, as the entire Barar 'qaum' is under my authority.

60. If you are a believer in God, then you should not delay the fulfilment of your promise.

61. You should recognise God so that you may not break any one's heart or injure any one's feelings, without any reason.

62. You are destined to sit on the royal throne, but I am surprised at your shortcomings as a result of injustice.

63. If I receive the orders, (from my Creator), my body and mind shall come to you.

64. Your orders based on *shariat* are surprising. It is unedifying to say anything other than truth.

65. You should not wield the sword carelessly for sucking the blood of anyone. God will also shed your own blood in the same manner.

66. Do not be indifferent but know your God. He is devoid of any longing for greatness.

67. He is Lord of the earth and the sky and is fearless.

68. He is the Creator of the universe and Master of all the spheres.

69. He is giver of food to all—from the ant to the elephant —and is the reformer of the ignorant.

70. He is protector of the poor and is above allurements and flattery.

71. He is the Master of unparalleled virtues and is an unfailing guide.

72. O Aurangzeb, there is a burden of that oath on your head; fulfil what you have promised.

73. Now you should act wisely and use your entire power.

74. What, If you have got my four sons martyred; the irrepressible Khalsa is still there.

75. What type of bravery in this ? You are extinguishing the sparks but are flaming the fire.

76. Firdausi has said nicely that haste is devil's hand-maid.

77. We have also been sent by the same Lord. He will be the witness on the Day of Judgement.

78. If you forget justice, God will forget you.

79. If you now set after doing justice seriously, God will bestow His blessings on you.

80. To preserve one's faith is good, but still better is to recognise God.

81. In my view you are unable to recognise God, since you have wounded the hearts of others.

82. O (false) benefactor, even God will not recognise you, nor will He care for your wealth.

83. Now if you take oaths a hundred times, I cannot feel assured a bit.

84. I cannot come to you because of your false oaths. I cannot tread that path. I will go wherever my Creator takes me.

85. O Aurangzeb, you are emperor of the land and a swift and clever horserider.

86. You are beautiful, wise and king of the country and its rich nobles.

87. You are past-master in the art of diplomacy, have knowledge of warfare and are expert in the utilisation of the kettle and the sword.

88. You are a wise and beautiful master who can give even the country in charity.

89. You have a towering status among the wise, are insurmountable like a mountain in battle and have some grand virtues.

90. You are no doubt emperor of the land, but, though of regal position, you are away from (real) faith.

91. I am chastiser of the hill chieftains who are idol worshippers. I do not worship idols but believe in decimating them.

92. Think of Time's ever-moving cycle. It carries doom in whichever direction it moves.

93. See the blessings of that great God who inflicts death on ten lakh men at the hand of one person (i.e.Khalsa).

94. What loss can the enemy inflict if God Himself is friendly and merciful ?

95. The same God redeems and guides us and teaches us how to sing praises.

96. When time comes, he blinds the eyesight of the enemy and brings out His lovely disciple unscathed (referring to his escape from Chamkaur).

97. God blesses him who does virtuous acts.

98. Whoever offers his body and mind in His service, God acts as his saviour.

99. What harm can the enemy's resourcefulness bring about if God bestows His Mercy.

100. If ten lakh enemy troops attack one person, then God protects that one person.

101. If your eyes are set on your army and wealth, then my eyes are fixed only on my Lord, the Saviour.

102. If you are proud of the riches and the countries you have subordinated, then I have God's support at my back.

103. Do not be careless in this transitory world. Everywhere this world is changing.

104. O Aurangzeb, where are Khusro and the wine-drinking Jamshed ? Where have Baba Adam and Shah Mohammad gone ?

105. Many like Darab and Dara, who are beyond enumertion, have gone by.

106. Where are Alexander and Sher Shah ? None of them exists in the world.

107. Taimur, Babar, Humayun and Akbar are also not there.

108. Look at the cycle of unkind and unfaithful time which is hovering on the head of every person every where.

109. If you are strong then do not harm the poor, and also do not scrap your promises with axes and hammers.

110. When God is friendly, what can the enemy do, even if he tries to play many tricks.

111. Even if the enemy adopts inimical postures thousands of time, he cannot harm any one who is friendly to God and takes shelter under His benevolence.*

MEETING OF BHAI DAYA SINGH WITH AURANGZEB

Although, Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh of Agra, who carried the letter, travelled fast to deliver it to emperor Aurangzeb as quickly as possible, they could not have an early audience with the emperor because of the presence of some confidants of the Governor of Sirhind in the emperor's court at that time. Therefore, Bhai Daya Singh had to look for a suitable opportunity to meet the emperor. Meanwhile, he stayed in the house of Bhai Jetha in Aurangabad from where he had to travel to Ahmadnagar, a distance of 65 miles, several times. It was after some months that he could avail of the opportunity to meet the emperor.

The Guru had given instructions to Bhai Daya Singh to speak out boldly and fearlessly before the emperor. So, when he presented himself before the emperor, he accosted him with "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Sri Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh." The emperor smiled and said to Bhai Daya Singh, "Has not the Guru been hasty in creating the Khalsa" ? Bhai Daya Singh also smilingly replied, "Yes Sir, in the same manner

* These 111 couplets in Persian verse comprise Zafar Nama as included in the "Dasam Granth". This translation is based on Punjabi version of the letter. There may be some variations of meanings.—Tr.

as you have been hasty in declaring your intention to create one religion out of two. The haste which the Guru adopted was to impress on your majesty that God willed three religions to operate instead of two, the third being Khalsa Panth".

The emperor was glad to hear this reply from Bhai Daya Singh but kept his quiet. He then read whole of the Zafar Nama and felt that the Guru was a highly intelligent, truthful and fearless warrior. All the sins committed by him in his life passed before his eyes. He was nearing 91 years of age then. His old body started trembling from a feeling of remorse and regretfulness at what he had done in his life time. He picked up his pen to express his helplessness and again wrote another letter to Guru Gobind Singh, showing his inability to come to the north due to old age and requesting the Guru to make it convenient to meet him in Ahmadnagar. He also assured him that justice will be done. The letter was sent through royal messengers, as before, with explicit instructions to them to respectfully make the Guru agree to accompany them.

PROOF OF EMPEROR'S REGRET

It has not been possible to trace the original copy of the emperor's letter so far. But another letter addressed by the emperor to his minister, Munim Khan, is available in Inayatul Ismi, Ahkam Alamgiri (pages 429-30) and has been reproduced by Dr. Ganda Singh in his book.* It also mentions the names of the messengers as Mohammad Beg and Sheikh Yar Mohammad. It seems that the emperor had written one apologetic letter direct to the Guru and sent another one through the messengers.

As already mentioned, the emperor's peace of mind was totally shaken. He wrote another letter to his sons in which he expressed his remorseful condition. Reference to this letter has been made by Winston Smith and by Dr. Gopal Singh in their books.** In that letter, the emperor had written to his sons as follows :

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* "Sikh Itehas Bare", p. 39.

** "History of India" (1920) by Winston Smith, p. 448 and "Guru Gobind Singh" by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 74.

"I do not know who I am, where I am, where I am to go and what will happen to a sinful person like me. Many like me have passed away after wasting their lives. Allah was in my heart but my blind eyes failed to see Him or His Light. I do not know how I will be received in Allah's court. No, No, I do not have any hope for my future. When I have lost self-confidence, what confidence can I have in others. I have committed many sins and do not know what punishments will be awarded to me in return for those sins".

GOVERNOR OF SIRHIND UPSET

It is obvious that Guru Gobind Singh's Zafar Nama had a demoralising effect on emperor Aurangzeb, whose future appeared to him to be dark. He saw in Guru Gobind Singh the only source of hope, which could show him the right and truthful path, as hinted by the Guru in his epistle. That is why the wanted to meet the Guru personally and apologise to him for his sins and seek redemption at his hands. He issued instructions to the Governors to withdraw all orders passed against the Guru. He also instructed his minister, Munim Khan, to make arrangements for safe passage of the Guru, when he came to meet him, and also to meet all expenses upto his arrival in Ahmadnagar. This greatly upset the Governor of Sirhind who was responsible for all the machinations.

The Guru expected a reply from the emperor. That is why he stayed on in Dina for several months, waiting for the return of Bhai Daya Singh. In Ahmadnagar, the men sent by the Governor of Sirhind put all types of obstacles in the way of Bhai Daya Singh and delayed his meeting with the emperor for several months. They had also reported about the Guru's letter and the arrival of Bhai Daya Singh in Ahmadnagar, to Wajid Khan, the Governor of Sirhind. The latter was afraid that if the emperor became favourably inclined towards the Guru, he i.e. Wajid Khan, might meet the same fate as that of Chandu who was instrumental in the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev in the days of emperor Jehangir. It was, therefore, Wajid Khan's conspiracy to eliminate the Guru before he could meet the emperor.

The Guru also had received reports from his confidants that the Governor of Sirhind had kept ready an army of several thousand Mughal soldiers to capture or eliminate him (i.e. the Guru). Realising the critical situation and in order not to put Shamir brothers in any difficulty, the Guru decided to leave Dina after staying there upto November 1705 A.D. He blessed all those who had served him in Dina and went further south towards the jungle side.

TRAVELOGUE TWELFTH

FROM DINA TO KOT KAPURA

From Dina, Guru Gobind Singh came to a village which he renamed Rakhwala instead of Rukhala. He stayed there for some time. Nearby, there was another village, called Jalal*, from where the headman, along with other members of the village council, came to see the Guru and brought two pots full of milk. They also presented to the Guru one dagger and four arrows which the Guru accepted with pleasure. On their complaint that the people of the neighbouring villages often attack them, the Guru ordained that so long as they remained steadfast in their belief in Sikh faith, no one would, thereafter, be able to harm them. And it did happen like that.

Later on, when the Khalsa forces came to this tract of the land on a conquering spree, they rested in that village. But to their astonishment, during the night, five of their horses were stolen and two of their men killed by those very people. With day-break, the Khalsa forces overran the whole village of Jalal and brought back their five stolen horses. The headman and other members of the village council then recalled what the Guru had said. They went and apologised to the Sikh forces and made an offering for *karah prasad*. But their village had been destroyed. So they decided to shift to a place near village Rakhwala, where the Guru had stayed, and built a new village called Guru Sar.

From there the Guru went to village Bhagta which lies at a distance of 15 miles from Jaito and which was founded by Bhai Bahlo's grandson, Bhai Bhagta.

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* This village is located in the erstwhile Nabha State and is 9 miles from Phul and 4 miles from Dina.

From Bhagta, the Guru came to Bandargram and Bargari villages and then to a place near Behwal and Seorase village where he decided to rest. By that time evening had set in. People of that village welcomed the Guru and suggested that the Sikhs might take their meals in individual houses to avoid delay in collecting the provisions and preparing the meals at one place. The Guru agreed and advised the Sikhs accordingly. One Mailagar Singh happened to go to the house of a Sikh, who was very poor, and had no provisions to prepare the meal. He searched his house and found only some dried berries and *piloos* which he grounded and served to the Sikh after soaking them in water. He was very much ashamed at his poverty but was helpless.

When all the Sikhs returned to the camp, the Guru enquired from all individually as to what they had eaten. That particular Mailagar Singh told the Guru in a very happy tone that he had been served very tasty food the like of which he had never tasted before. He also thanked the host Sikh for his spirit of devotion and service. The Guru knew that he was concealing the truth and asked him to tell openly what type of food that was. The Sikh kept mum but another Sikh narrated the real position. The Guru called the host Sikh and blessed him, saying that he would also one day become a prominent member of Khalsa Brotherhood.*

THE GURU IN KOT KAPURA

Next day the Guru reached Kot Kapura. He had by then with him a large number of armed Sikhs, some of them with horses and others on foot. They all camped outside the town. While some Sikhs went out for collecting provisions, the remaining Sikhs assembled in a congregation and sang *gurbani* hymns which the Guru heard with rapt attention. The people of Kot Kapura came in large numbers when they heard about the Guru's arrival in their midst. Kapur Singh, the founder of the town, also came and presented a decorated horse to the Guru, with all humility. After enquiring about his welfare, the Guru spoke to him

* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 3).

as follows :

"Kapura, you wear arms, let me see how much bravery and patience you can show. Do you have any desire to take part in any big battle or not ? By that alone the warriors can attain high status".

Kapura replied :

"Sir, it is all in your hands. You can make the brave behave like cowards and cowards fight for the brave."

The Guru again asked, "What animals do you hunt" ?

Kapura replied : "I keep many hunting dogs and eagles which do not allow even big birds to escape".

After saying such words Kapura went home and came again on the following morning, with his robes flowing and his followers raising dust. The Mailagar Singh, who was standing in service of the Guru, told Kapura to be respectful and not raise dust on all sides. This enraged Kapura but he kept silent and sat down after paying obeisance to the Guru. The Guru at that time was sitting on a cot with an attendent waving flywhisk over his head. On another cot, clean and shining arms were laid out with incense burning in their midst and another attendent was waiving flywhisk over them. This surprised Kapura who, with a smile on his face, enquired from the Guru as follows :

"Guru Ji ! It is no doubt a customary practice to waive the flywhisk over your head, but what is the significance of treating the arms in the same manner and also burning incense and offering flowers to them" ?

The Guru explained :

"It shows respect for arms. Flywhisk is waved to ward off the flies from contaminating them. Even gods worship them because they save them from giants. It is these arms which enable the kings to rule over the world and in heavens as well. All small as well as great persons are dependent on arms. Only one who wears arms can be really brave".

Kapura heard the Guru's words patiently but his doubts still remained.

The Guru, then changing the subject, spoke to Kapura as follows :

"Listen Kapura, you have a fortress. If you give the same to us, we will fortify our position and fight with the Mughals who will definitely attack us with full preparation. They are cowards and will not be able to stand our onslaught. When they run away after defeat, you can expand your sovreignty upto the river and then live peacefully".

Kapura, who was not prepared to comply with that demand, replied :

"Sir, we do not have the power to oppose the Mughals. If I give the fortress to you, they will arrest and hang me. You are fearless. You have already fought with the Mughals with the result that lakhs of lives have been lost. You had ultimately to give up Anandpur, now you want to have me destroyed at their hands".

On hearing these words, the Guru told Kapura forcefully, "If this is your slavish mentality and desire, then be sure that whoever has fear in his mind is doomed. The Mughals will catch hold of you and, ignoring your virtues, kill you. I wanted to expand your rule with the help of arms at which you have looked with critical eyes. But you have been unlucky. Regarding the loss of Anandpur, about which you have taunted me, rest assured that town will prosper again. But you will not be able to preserve your *kot* (town). On the other hand you will be permanently separated from it. Those, whose slave you are considering yourself to be, will one day imprison you and send you to the gallows".

The Guru continued : "When you came to me first, you showed a lot of faith, but you have been foolish enough not to weigh your gain and loss correctly. You have preferred to live like a coward and have lost the benifits of this world as well as the next.*

With these words ringing in his ears, Kapura went away and immediately occupied the fortress lest the Guru might take its possession forcibly. He knew the Guru was in dire need of defensive protection but he was also afraid of punishment by Mughal forces. The Guru's warning was also worrying him and making him feel restless.

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 4).

FROM KOT KAPURA TO DHILLAV

Dhillav is a village located near Kot Kapura. When Guru Gobind Singh went to that village he came to know that a large number of Sodhis of the family of Kaul Ji, who was descendent of Prithi Chand, the eldest brother of his great grandfather (Guru Arjan Dev), had settled there. Kaul Ji had four sons, Satta Nand, Har Nand, Amrik Rai and Banwali. Banwali's son, Abhai Ram, was very virtuous. He too had four sons, Sri Ram, Praja Pat, Sri Ram Kuar and Jaspat. On hearing about the Guru's arrival in their village, they all came to see him, along with Kaul Ji. The Guru welcomed them and met them with open arms.

Kaul Ji expressed sorrow at the destruction of the city of Anandpur and the martyrdom of the Guru's four sons. He also enquired about Kapura's welfare as he was Kaul Ji's follower. The Guru told him all what had transpired at Kot Kapura and said "Kapura, who is an agent and a sycophant of the Mughals, had been virtually rooted out".

Kaul Ji : "But he is my follower and his roots are in my belly. Whoever wants to destroy him will first have to tear my belly". Guru Ji replied : "Kaul Ji, if he is after tearing your belly, you yourself will be eager to destroy him."

This conversation filled Kaul Ji with anxiety as he knew that Guru Ji's words, like Lord Rama's arrows, were bound to hit the traget. He did not pursue this point further and went home, along with his family, in a subdued and sorrowful mood. He spent whole of the night in anxiety. On the following day, after completing his morning prayers, he came again and presented to the Guru a set of new white dress. He asked the Guru to give up wearing blue-coloured clothes and change over to white. The Guru agreed. He tore off the blue clothes bit by bit and threw the pieces in the fire lit up in front of him, in the presence of Kaul Ji.*

* According to "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 5), the Guru kept back one small piece of blue cloth which he stuck up with his daggar as an indication that such clothes were worn by the Guru. The Nihangs continue to follow that practice by always wearing blue clothes.

Everytime he threw a piece in fire, he recited the following words :

"ਨੀਲ ਬਸਤ੍ਰ ਲੇ ਕਪੜੇ ਫਾੜੇ ਤੁਰਕ ਪਠਾਣੀ ਅਮਲ ਗਇਆ ।"

(The blue clothes have been torn and the practice of the Turks and the Pathans has ended).

Kaul Ji enquired as to why that change in Guru Nanak's *bani* had been made when the precedence of Ram Rai's excommunication from guruship for changing one word of *gurbani* from *mussalman* to *be-eaman* before Aurangzeb was there. The Guru replied as follows :

"Kaul Ji, the world knows about the intention of Ram Rai. He wanted to increase his income and gain the goodwill of the emperor. I have not done so to please anyone, nor have I made or suggested any written amendment. The Mughals had ruled over the country in this dress for generations on account of Guru Nanak's blessings given to Babar. But they have committed untold atrocities on innocent people and have tried to destroy Hindu religion. They have gone beyond all limits. Now, by saying so and by offering the martyrdom of my entire family, I have uprooted the Mughal rule from the land and protected Hindu *dharma*."

He continued. "It had also become necessary to do so for the reason that the Mughals have not been taking sin as a sin but as an Islamic virtue. They use God's Name to deceive others and show themselves as the faithful. '

Kaul Ji was pleased to hear such views from the Guru's mouth. He thought that the Guru alone who had sacrificed his all for the protection of righteousness and the weak, innocent people could say so, and as such the whole world should be grateful to him.

Thinking Kaul Ji to be a reliable Sodhi of high spiritual attaintment, the Guru gave him some memorable small arms of his own outfit to be kept in safe custody. Thereafter, he gave blessings to all and leaving Dhillav took to his further journey.

THE GURU IN JAITO

Passing through Maluka and Chauntra villages, the Guru reached Jaito and rested for the night near a tank of

which he spoke very highly. From there he went to Suniar village where he camped and where one dogra villager, Summan by name, who had many milch cattle, brought pitchers full of milk and received the Guru's blessings.

While still there, Kapura came for hunting on that side. On hearing that the Guru was camping there, he came, along with his companions, to pay his homage to the Guru.

The Guru said : "Kapura, how are you feeling ?"

Kapura : "Sir, I am not feeling well. My mind is in a depressed mood. Firstly, I have not been able to obey your orders. Secondly, I am in deadly fear of the Mughals. You have also come away from Kot Kapura, displeased with me. I am thus very much upset. I do not know how I can please you. I am also unable to face the Mughals. They are the rulers."

On hearing these words of humility, the Guru's heart melted. He gave Kapura a double-edged sword and a shield.* This pleased him to some extent. When he was about to leave on his horseback, the Guru again prompted him to act like a brave man, saying :

"Kapura, do not behave like a coward, a peevish mongrel and a trail-bearer of the Mughals. Brave men never feel shy of fighting. If they die, they are honoured by the gods in heavens and if they win they receive appreciation in this world. This should be the outlook of a warrior. But, without luck, this status cannot be attained". These words were also intended for the other Sikhs sitting around the Guru.

At that time, a reporter brought the news that a large Mughal force was approaching from Sirhind side. The Guru sent a Sikh after Kapura, who had by then left, to depute one of his companions conversant with the countryside to locate a suitable place where he could fight a pitched battle with the Mughal army which was fast approaching. Kapura obeyed and deputed one person, named Khanan, along with some horsemen, for the purpose. Khanan was also instruc-

* These arms are still available and have been kept with due respect in the Faridkot palace.

ted to mix up with the Mughal army and keep Kapura informed of its moves.* Khanan, after understanding the whole plan, came to the Guru and suggested the *dhab* (waterpond) of Khidrana as the only suitable place for the battle. Nowhere else was water available in the neighbourhood. This fact, he argued, would force the Mughal forces to turn back simply due to thirst.

THE WATER POND OF KHIDRANA

Khanan, accompanied by his horsemen, led the Guru towards the village of Ramiana. The Sikhs were following their Guru on horses and on foot. In Ramiana, Jag Raj, a working Jat, was told by a Sikh not to reveal the movement of the Guru to the Mughals who were following him. But that Jat, out of fear, could not withhold the information and gave it out when they Mughals reached that village and enquired about it.

The Guru had, in the meantime, moved further. He had many Brar Sikhs with him. One of the Sikhs spotted out some Mughal soldiers coming from a distance on horses and told the Guru about it. At that time, they were nearing a village. The Guru asked Rupa Khatri of that village, who had brought some jaggery as a present, if he should encamp there and fight with the Mughals who were advancing rapidly. Rupa got terrified at the idea and advised the Guru against doing so, lest he be punished and his village destroyed by the Mughals.

The Guru did not stop there and proceeded further on. After some distance he felt thirsty and asked for water. At that time, only Khanan, the guide, had some water in his waterbag. But Khanan told a lie and said he had none. Then he said that he could give it on payment of one rupee per bowl. A Sikh paid the money and brought a bowl of water to the Guru. On seeing it, the Guru said that the water was dirty and should be thrown away. The Sikh brought another bowl of water from Khanan and this time

* This shows that Kapura had the Guru's good at heart, but he was afraid of the rulers.

he charged one *dinar** for it. The Guru told Khanan that water is thinner than every thing but he had proved thinner than water even.

SANGAT FROM MAJHA ARRIVES

It will be recalled that before leaving the Fort of Anandgarh in December 1704 A.D., some Sikhs had deserted the Guru after giving *bedawa* (letter of desertion).** When they returned to their villages in Majha tract, their womenfolk and other villagers taunted them for their cowardice. They had come to know that the Guru had left Chamkaur and that his four sons had become martyrs. Some of the village councils held a meeting and decided to go to the Guru in a deputation to request him to give up fighting with imperial forces and to live in peace as before in which case they would be willing to join him again.

That deputation came in search of the Guru and met him near Ramiana. The Guru came down from his horse and so did the Sikhs. A few Sikhs stood guard with their swords and muskets ready for use in case the Mughals attacked them suddenly. One of them was put on a treetop to look out for the enemy and warn them in advance. The Guru sat down with the visitors to hear what they had to say. Their leader spoke as follows :

"Guru Ji, the villagers of Majha are very sorry to learn about the happenings in Anandpur and Chamkaur. We feel ashamed that those who have been claiming to be Sikhs from generations have deserted you in your difficult days. They have not been able to cover themselves with honour as your Sikhs. Now all of us request you to give up enemity with the rulers. We will arrange a meeting between you and the emperor and assure the latter of your greatness and also make him worship you. Only when there is complete rapport between you and the emperor will we able to continue as your Sikhs; otherwise the present difficulties will persist and the people will lose their faith and confidence

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* A gold coin, weighing six *mashas* (nearly 6 grammes) in weight.

**See Travelogue Ninth, p. 108.

It is for making this request that we have been deputed by the entire people of Majha."

The Guru heard what they had to say and then told them in a stern voice :

"Look, when you came to Anandpur to become Sikhs, you accepted all my teachings and directions. Now you are talking differently. You have come to teach me like a Guru. I do not need Sikhs like you who have already once deserted me. Those who had left me are gone for ever. You may also go away. No one will call you back. Today, you are trying to act as intermediaries and settle our dispute with the Mughals. Where were you when Guru Arjan Dev was martyred ? At that time your village councils had lost all strength and you all remained safely in your homes. Again, when Guru Teg Bahadur went to Delhi to sacrifice himself, the whole of Majha remained silent. Why did not any one of you go to the emperor then and intervene in order to settle the dispute ? If you had done anything at that time, I might have accepted your suggestion. Are you not ashamed of such a behaviour ?"

Guru Ji continued : "Of what use are such Sikhs who can deceive their Guru in time of need ? You may again, if you like, write a letter of disownment and leave for your homes."

How full of emotion, sincerity and courage were the Guru's words ! The Sikhs from Majha had no reply to give. They kept silent with their heads bowed down with shame. The Guru further told them :

"I am after uprooting the Mughal rule from the country and you have come to arrange a compromise because you are afraid of fighting like brave people."*

The village councils had told the deputationists that they would not be able to remain Sikhs if the Guru continued to fight with the Mughals. So they were in a fix and a feeling of disappointment and sorrow filled their minds. The Guru was also disillusioned with the attitude adopted by them.

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 8).

Meanwhile, the Sikh sitting on the treetop gave a warning to get ready as the din and dust showed that the enemy was approaching. The Guru was about to shoot his arrow when the Brar Sikhs accompanying him suggested that the waterpond of Khidrana which was a little ahead, would be a better site for engaging the enemy. The Guru agreed and moved on to Khidrana. The Mughal forces had also by then reached the neighbourhood of Khidrana.

Five of the Majhail Sikhs thought it a matter of extreme shame to return to their homes, leaving the Guru and the other Sikhs in a difficult situation. They addressed their companions with great emotion, as follows :

"By disowning the Guru, we have committed an unpardonable sin. With what face to show can we now return to our villages ? Remember, death has to come to all of us, sooner or later. If we now die in the service of the Guru our sin can be atoned."

On hearing these words, forty other Sikhs and one woman (Mai Bhago) felt moved and headed towards Khidrana to join the Guru. The rest of nearly 150 Sikhs from Majha stepped aside to avoid encirclement by the Mughals. Meanwhile, the Guru had advanced a little further. The forty Majhail Sikhs thought it expedient to engage the enemy in between to allow more time to the Guru to proceed further.

With this idea in view, those Sikhs spread their cotton sheets and underwears on the trees to show that the Sikhs had their cantonment stationed there. They also started reciting *gurbani* loudly. Occasionally, they would fire a gunshot in the direction of the enemy to show their presence. On the other side, the Mughal commander, seeing that his forces had reached the target, ordered them to keep their matchlocks ready. At that time, Kapura was also mingled up in the enemy ranks, may be voluntarily or with the consent of Mughal commander. He was pointing out the track along which the Guru had marched ahead.

When the Mughal forces advanced further, they were met with arrowshots and gunfiring from the Sikh side.

The attacking soldiers could not inflict much loss among the Sikhs as the latter were taking shelter under the trees. But when the Mughals came too close, some Sikhs dashed into the enemy ranks and started hand to hand fight. Their ability to wield the sword effectively was astonishing.

The Guru was sitting on a hillock about a mile and a half away from that place. From the noise of gunshots and battle cries from both sides, the Guru could assess that the Majhail Sikhs had joined the battle and were holding up the enemy from advancing further. The Guru now started shooting his arrows forcefully and creating havoc among the enemy ranks. The Sikhs were out to sacrifice themselves and, therefore, they fought ferociously, whereas the Mughal soldiers, while trying to advance further, were also eager to save their lives.

Soon, a Sikh darted forth from under a tree and jumped into the fray, killing many Mughal soldiers with his sword until he himself fell down fighting. Seeing his bravery, another band of five Sikhs fell on the enemy and sacrificed themselves after killing many of them. They were followed by other batches of ten Sikhs each until all the forty Majhails became martyrs for the Guru's cause. Only one woman soldier, Mai Bhago, who was fighting in man's disguise, was left. She too fell martyr after killing one and inflicting injuries on several other Mughal soldiers. The Mughal commander now felt certain that the Guru had been trapped and killed. He wanted to capture the Guru's dead body and present it to emperor Aurangzeb.

KAPURA'S STRATEGY

The commander, in a moment of exaltation, took Kapura into confidence. He knew his soldiers were feeling thirsty and those who were lying seriously injured on the battle field were also crying for water. So he asked Kapura to locate the Guru's dead body and also find out the place from where water could be procured for his soldiers. Kapura replied as follows :

"Khan Sahib, the Guru's dead body has not so far been spotted out any where. It is possible that he might have

even escaped on horseback. In any case, it will be a difficult and long process to scan the entire battle field which is covered with piles of dead bodies and arrange their burial. As regards the availability of water, the last pool of water had been left ten miles behind and the one ahead was at a distance of thirty miles from that place. The waterpond of Khidrana, on which they had been banking, had dried up. So the best course would be to go back and save the soldiers who were still alive and were feeling extremely thirsty."

The commander agreed with this sensible suggestion and, after collecting the arms of dead soldiers, ordered his forces to march back to the last stop. Finding that his strategy was working successfully, Kapura tried to eulogise the commander further by saying :

"Khan Sahib, you have achieved a great victory today. Those faithful who have died fighting will go to heaven. If you had not ordered the army to march back and decided to go ahead for thirty miles in search of water, then those alive would have also died on account of thirst."

While returning, the Mughals were feeling happy in their hearts on account of their assumption that the Guru had at long last been killed.

LETTER OF DESERTION TORN

After the battle was over, the Guru came down from the hillock to the place where the Majhails had fought the battle and become martrys. He was greatly pleased at their sacrifice. Those, who decided to desert him had proved themselves to be his faithful sons. He knelt down beside each one of the dead Sikhs, wiped his face with his scarf, and blessed him saying :

ਬੀਸ ਹਜ਼ਾਰੀ ਤੀਸ ਹਜ਼ਾਰੀ । ਇਸ ਕੀ ਹੋਇ ਲਾਖਨ ਸਰਦਾਰੀ ।
ਇਤਨੇ ਕਦਮ ਅੱਗਰ ਚਲ ਇਹ । ਤਿਤੀ ਅਧਕਤਾ ਸੁਖ ਕੀ ਲੇਹਿ ।*

(Here is my Sikh whose command is over twenty thousand soldiers. He is the one whose command extends over thirty thousand soldiers. They will rule over the hearts of lakhs

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 12).

of people. They will be blessed with happiness according to the number of steps they have advanced towards me).

When the Guru came to the unconscious body of Bhai Mahan Sikh, the leader of the Majhail Sikhs who had given the letter of desertion, he recognised him and spoke to him lovingly as follows :

"Mahan Singh", open your eyes. I have come and you can see me sitting close to you. I am greatly pleased with you. Demand anything and I will give it to you. If you want your life restored, I will do so."

Mahan Singh opened his eyes and, on seeing the Guru in front of him, spoke haltingly :

"Guru Ji, to see you before my end came was my only desire. I do not need anything else."

But the Guru was overjoyed at the spirit of devotion and sacrifice shown by Mahan Singh and his companions by meeting the enemy attack. He, therefore, insisted on Mahan Singh expressing his last desire. At that time, Mahan Singh murmured : "Guru Ji, we did not recognise your greatness and proved to be ungrateful sons. Being afraid of death we deserted you. But you are full of mercy. My only request now is that you my kindly tear off that letter of desertion which we gave you in Anandpur and keep the *sangat* of Majha linked with you and under your benign grace."

The Guru was pleased with this selfless request but told Bhai Mahan Singh to forget those who had run away out of fear. But Bhai Mahan Singh had no other desire. He wanted that shameful letter to be torn off. The Guru felt compelled to comply with his demand. Seeing his eagerness, he took out the letter which he was foresightedly carrying with him and tore it into pieces within the view of Bhai Mahan Singh. Thereafter, the brave warrior closed his eyes and breathed his last in perfect peace.

The Guru then asked the Brar Sikhs surrounding him to collect dry firewood and prepare a big funeral pyre. He cremated all the forty brave Majhail heroes with his own hands and in his own presence. He also blessed that place in the following words,

"The place where any one *rishi* or saint dies is considered to be holy. But here forty Sikh martyrs have laid down their lives after giving up all worldly desires. They have achieved salvation. The place will, hereafter, be known as Mukatsar and not "Khidrane Di Dhab."

It was the first of Magh Samvat 1763 Bikrami, corresponding to January 1706 A.D. when this event took place.*

MAI BHAGO

After the cremation was over, a Sikh informed the Guru that at some distance in the battle field, a woman was lying seriously injured. There was also the dead body of a Mughal soldier lying at a short distance from her. The Guru went there and found the woman to be Mai Bhago still somewhat conscious. He attended to her injuries and then spoke to her as follows :

"Brave daughter, you came from your home with the desire to be blessed with sons. But here you have fought heroically along with your brothers, in the disguise of a male soldier. Blessed are you who have left behind all worldly pains and sorrows !"

Mai Bhago, on regaining full consciousness said :

"Guru Ji, I went to Anandpur to have your *darshan* and be blessed with sons. But you had left Anandpur. I then came here along with the Sikhs of Majha, but in the troubled situation they decided to go back. Soon thereafter the occasion arose for fighting with Mughal forces. I too became anxious to join my brothers and fight shoulder to shoulder with them, in disguise. While fighting, I killed

* There are writers who think that the battle of Mukatsar was fought during the hot season and not in the month of Magh or January. They adduce the drying up of the pond at Khidrana and the paucity of water as the reason for this presumption. In their opinion, the Maghi fair held at Mukatsar was fixed later on by the Sikhs of the area. But the author considers otherwise and holds that Maghi date was fixed according to the actual date of the event by the Guru himself. The paucity of water at that time is attributed by him to failure of winter rains.—Tr.

one Mughal with my spear and sword. But they attacked me in large numbers, and I lay seriously injured here. I have no desire to go back now and will remain in your service. The Guru dressed up her wounds and kept her in his entourage when he went towards the Deccan.

Khanan, the guide provided by Kapura, returned from there to his village. Finding Kapura to be mixed up with the Mughal army, he did not disclose anything to him about the Guru but left it to time to reveal everything.

The Guru moved from Khidrana further south and camped at a short distance near the tank of an inn. Some Brar Sikhs who knew the countryside were accompanying him.

A SADHU BLESSED

On the other side of the tank lived an old sadhu. His disciples saw the Guru and enquired from the Sikhs about his antecedents. They went and told the sadhu that the Guru was the same person who had fought many battles with the Mughals and killed thousands of them and whom they were then looking for. The sadhu enquired about the Guru's age and was told that it was nearly 40 years. This made the sadhu sceptical about the Guru's spiritual attainments, but on the insistance of some disciples went with them to see the Guru. At that time the congregation had finished the evening prayers. The sadhu was so much impressed with the whole atmosphere that he fell at the Guru's feet and begged to be made a Sikh. The Guru patted him on the back and told him that he was already a Sikh who had undergone austerities upto ripe old age in order to gain salvation. Time had now come to pray to God to remove his ego and grant him mental peace. The Guru blessed the sadhu with a benign look which illumined his mind by removing all doubts. Thereafter, the sadhu went back to his hemlet as a new enlightened soul, surprised at the spiritual greatness of the Guru at such a young age.

SETTLEMENT OF KARMAS

Next day the Guru reached Bazidpur, a village four miles from Ferozepur on the road to Ludhiana. Before he

could stop there for rest, some horsemen told him that in the nearby town of Kasur, twenty two big Pathan Sardars were living. They had their armies with them and, if they came to know of the Guru's presence in the neighbourhood, they might attack them unaware. The Guru listened to them and said in a exuberant mood :

"Do not be afraid. If they attack us we will fight as best as we can. But Khalsa Ji, the glory of Mughal rule has already ebbed; whatever remains of it will also vanish in a short time. In this area of Kahna Kachha, people from village after village will become brave and illustrious Sikhs. Wait for some time and see what is ordained by God."*

While the Guru was uttering these prophetic words, a partridge was heard chirping. The Guru looked up at the bird and said :

"Alright, you have spoken and I have heard." He at once jumped on his horse and, speeding it, released his hawk to hunt down that bird. For the first time, the hawk failed to accomplish the task. The Guru then let go some of his hounds and also asked his horsemen to chase the bird. After lot of running and sweating, the bird was cought and brought before the Guru. Its wings were removed and its flesh was thrown before the hawk who notched it to pieces and ate to its fill. Seeing this unusual thing happening before his eyes, one Sikh, Dan Singh, enquired from the Guru as to why such a petty bird had been hunted down and killed mercilessly instead of some big prey. The Guru explained the mystery in the following words :

"This bird was a Jat in its past birth and my hawk was a *bania* (provision merchant). The Jat had taken some money on loan from that merchant, but in order to avoid payment he had shifted to another village. After sometime the merchant was able to catch hold of the Jat. The letter gave back some money and promised, on Guru's oath, to repay the rest also. After some time the merchant died and took rebirth as the hawk. Similarly, the Jat also died and was reborn as a partridge. Today, when the bird had chirped, I was reminded of its oath which had made me a

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 14).

surety. It was in order to settle their account that I had to arrange all that in my presence. You have done well to have made this query. It is the duty of all Sikhs to express their doubts freely and it is the Guru's responsibility to remove those doubts."

ANOTHER SIMILAR DOUBT REMOVED

In Rupana village, where the Guru stayed next, a similar event happened. While the Guru was strolling near the village, he saw a big vulturous crow sitting on top of a ruined building. He shot it down with his arrow. The Sikhs enquired about the reason for doing so. The Guru explained as follows :

"This crow once used to be a Raja with a large army of soldiers. He had faith in Sikh gurus. In his town also lived another disciple who once invited all fellow Sikhs, including the Raja, to meals. He had a young beautiful unmarried daughter whom the Raja wanted to take away and marry. When the girl came to know of the bad intention of the Raja, she promised to go to his house voluntarily on the following day. During the night she ended her life by taking poison, after telling her father the reason for her doing so. She also cursed the Raja to become a vulturous crow to roam about among desolate ruins. This crow was that cursed Raja who had been extricated from that birth to enable him to be reborn and improve his lot by performing good deeds."

A PROUD YOGI REFORMED

After resting for one night in Rupana, the Guru reached Thehri village. There, a proud yogi used to beguile the people by showing miracles. He would milk cows without the calves and prepare *khichri* everyday in a new earthen pot which he would break into as many pieces as the number of his followers were there to eat it. He had met the Guru once earlier also and had told him, "You are going around in the world, calling yourself a Guru. If you have any miraculous powers, show them to me, otherwise I cannot be satisfied". In reply, the Guru had promised to show him

miracles when he would visit his abode. He then recalled that promise and went to the place where the yogi lived. At that time the yogi was sitting in meditation. The Guru took out an arrow from the pouch, touched it with the ground and then with the yogi's head and spoke :

"Hukam Nath, speak out your mind, are you alright ? The yogi replied, "My obeisance to Guru Gobind Singh ! I was happy with my power of performing miracles, but now that power has been withdrawn and I am bereft of all my strength."

The Guru again spoke : "Hukam Nath, do you want to go to some other place ? I will show you Delhi or Lahore as you may please and then bring you back here." The yogi recalled all that he had been wishing and boasting of earlier and replied, "All my desires have vanished. You have removed the very essence of my strength and left me like an empty shell."

The Guru took pity on him and said, "You wanted to see miracles from me and you have seen them. Now rest here in peace; you have reaped the fruits of your desires.* Ashamed of his actions, the yogi left that village and went to live in another village, called Ratia.

THE GURU OFFERS TO PAY FINE

In that very village, there was a grave of one Kasam Bhatti. While passing along it, the Guru expressed a few words of praise for the beautiful location and structure of the grave. A Sikh, Bhai Man Singh, objected and reminded the Guru of his teachings not to worship tombs or graves. The Guru appreciated the objection and readily paid Rupees five as fine for that mistake which he had intentionally

*Note : The Guru had to show miracles to the yogi in order to remove his ego and to reform him by weaning him away from the 'tantric' path. Although, in Sikh religion, supernatural powers are deemed to be maid-servants of those imbued with the spirit of God's Name, these are not displayed for deceiving people and making them one's followers.—Tr.

committed for testing his Sikhs.*

THE FAITHFUL BLESSED

An Arora *bania* of village Thehri brought a lot of provisions for the Guru's kitchen and received blessings for his faith and service.

Similarly, from another village at a short distance from Thehri, a mastana recluse, Bhoondar by name, expressed his extreme happiness at the Guru's arrival by bringing five rupees in cash and a length of fine cloth as presents. The Guru was pleased at his humility and came down from his horse. At that time, a large number of Brar Sikhs, who had enrolled themselves in the Guru's army, were accompanying him. Bhoondar brought pots full of sweets and milk and served them to the Guru and all the Sikhs. The Guru blessed Bhoondar for the spirit of service shown by him.

BRAR SOLDIERS DEMAND PAY

Passing through Kal Jherani and Chatiana villages, the Guru came to a mound known as 'Brahmi Da Tilla' after the name of a fakir, called Brahmi. Sabo Ki Talwandi's boundry started from near that mound. The Brar Sikh soldiers planned to demand arrears of their pay from the Guru before he left their boundry and entered that of Sabo Ki Talwandi. They were advised by one Dana (who was also a Brar but had not till then taken the Guru's baptism) not to do so while the Guru was still in journey. As soon as he settled down at one place, at least for some time, and the Sikhs started coming to him with their presents and donations, he would clear every body's dues. But the Brars were in no mood to listen to that advice. All of them got down from their horses and, holding the reins of the Guru's horse, demanded the arrears of their pay there and then. They would not allow the Guru to proceed further.

* Verily, in accepting the mistake fair-facedly lies one's greatness. That was the spirit in which Maharaja Ranjit Singh had accepted lashes from the Jathedar of Akal Takht, Akali Phoola Singh, as fine for some misdemeanour.—Tr.

The Guru assured the Brars that as soon as he reached a resting place, which could give him some respite, he would settle their accounts. But the Brars were adamant. They preferred money to their faith in the Guru. Seeing their obduracy, the Guru shot an arrow in the sky. Strangely enough, a severe thunderstorm developed, followed by heavy rain and hailstorm. The Brars took shelter under trees but the Guru remained sitting on his horse whose head he protected with his shield. The Sikhs provided a cover of blankets over the Guru to ward off the rain. The Guru decided to camp at that very place for the night.

Soon, a group of Sikhs arrived. One of them brought a mule-load of money which he offered to the Guru, with all humility.* The Guru gave whatever was due to the Brar Sikhs and then asked Dana what his dues were. With folded hands, he said,"Maharaj, I have, with your blessings, enough wealth and progeny. I now only need the boon of Sikh faith." The Guru smiled and told Dana, "You are also a Brar, why are you separating yourself from others ?

Dana fell at the Guru's feet and begged not to be counted along with others. The Guru was pleased and said, "Just as Bhai Mahan Singh saved the honour of Majha, so have you today saved the honour of Malwa. You should take baptism of the double-edged sword and also give up the use of tobacco".**

Dana said,"But Sir, without taking tobacco, one suffers from flatulence." The Guru replied, "No, it will not happen like that."

Then Dana again said, "Kindly consider me a Sikh without my keeping *keshas* i.e. long hair on the head.

"The *keshas* are necessary", the Guru said, "in order to differentiate between Sikhs and others. Without *keshas* all other symbols are incomplete."

ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਸਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਪੰਜ ਹਰਫ ਕਾਫ ।
ਹਰਿਗਜ਼ ਨ ਬਾਸ਼ਦ ਦੀ ਪੰਜ ਮੁਆਫ ।

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* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 17) according to which the money was brought by one of the descendents of Bhai Rupa.

**"Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu. 17)

ਕਾਛ ਕੜਾ ਕਾਰਦੋ ਕੰਘਾ ਬਿਦਾਨ ।
ਬਿਨਾ ਕੇਸ ਹੋਚ ਅਸਤ ਜੁਮਲਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ।*

(Five are the symbols of Sikhism, all starting with the letter K. No one can be exempted from these under any circumstances. These are *kachh* (underwear), *kara* (steel bracelet), *kard* (small kirpan or dagger), *kangha* (comb for keeping the hair clean). Without *keshas* and full beard, all the remaining four symbols are incomplete and of no value).

Dana promised to do as directed. Thereafter, the Guru administered the baptism to him at that very place and Dana became Dana Singh, a full-fledged Singh.

AVARICE OF BRAR SIKHS

Seeing that even after paying their dues, lot of money had been left with the Guru, the minds of Brar Sikhs were filled with avarice. They said to the Guru, "We had joined your force in the strength of two or three members from the same family. We had deputed others to look after our family affairs during our absence. As such we will have to pay something to them out of the money received from you, and nothing worth the name will be left with us. So we should, as a special case, be given double the pay. Only then, can we go back happily to our homes".

The Guru saw the feeling of greed prevailing in their minds. He gave them double the pay, as demanded, and even then some money was left. The Guru ordered that money to be buried there and named the place as 'Gupatsar' on account of the hidden treasure preserved there.

While returning home, the Brars were feeling jubilant at having extracted double the pay from the Guru, under threat and in time, otherwise if they had allowed him to cross into another territory, it would not have been possible for them to obtain anything. One of them disliked these remarks and conveyed them to the Guru. On hearing this, the Guru remarked, "It will not now take long for my Khalsa to establish control over their land and demand revenue from them at shoe point. These people were destined to become rulers but now they will have to live as subjects

* From Dasam Granth.

on account of their own foolishness. They have spoilt their own future by bragging about their cleverness."*

BAHMI FAKIR CONVERTED AS SINGH

On the mound near which the Guru settled the accounts of Brar Sikhs, there lived a fakir, named Ibrahim Shah, but commonly known as Bahmi. He had reserved four and a half yards of land on which he had built a *pucca* grave for his burial. He had heard about the exploits of Guru Gobind Singh in challenging the tyrannical Mughal rule and the sacrifices of true Muslims, like Pir Buddhu Shah, for his cause. He had now seen with his own eyes the disloyalty of Brar Sikhs and the scenes of divine help witnessed by the Guru in settling their accounts. With genuine faith in his greatness, he presented to the Guru one maund each of ghi, sugar and maida and requested him to accept his hospitality. The Guru gladly did so and had meals prepared for all from those provisions.

In the evening, while the Guru was sitting in meditation, Bahmi fakir came and spoke to the Guru as follows :

"I have, after due deliberation, realised in my life that there is no other religion which can equal Sikh religion. In other religions the gurus would first ask their disciples to cleanshave their heads and faces and then send them to beg as mendicants. But in your religion, your disciples, instead of looking ugly, wear neat and smart dresses and have buoyant looks. I would like to join your fold and, therefore, beseech your approval". The Guru agreed and asked Bhai Man Singh to prepare he nectar of baptism which was administered to him He thus voluntarily became a Sikh and was renamed Ajmer Singh. It is recorded that he continued to stay on that mound as a Sikh practising meditation till his end.**

IN SAHIB GRAM AND BABIHA VILLAGES

On the following day, the Guru moved on to a village, named Sahib Chand Gram. Two *bania* Sikhs, named Ranji

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*"Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 17).

**"Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 18).

and Ghumi, of that village knew the Guru and welcomed him in their midst. They offered to bring provisions for preparing meals but the Guru told them to first become Amritdhari Singhs before their offer could be accepted. They agreed. As instructed by the Guru, Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh and four other Amritdhari Singhs prepared the nectar of baptism while reciting Japji, Jaap Sahib, Swaiyyas, Chaupai and Anand Sahib. After being baptised, the two *bania* Sikhs were renamed Rangi Singh and Ghumi Singh, respectively. Thereafter, they were asked to bring the provisions from which meals were prepared and taken by all.

After resting there for the night, the Guru marched through Suniar Gram and Rohle and then reached Babiha village. He liked a clean spot near that village and rested there for nine days. The Sikhs of Babiha were overjoyed and brought large amounts of provisions for the Guru's kitchen during the period of his stay there.

STORY OF DIWANA FAKIRS

In Babiha village, a thirsty Diwana Fakir tried to intrude into the place where the Guru was resting. The Sikhs, suspecting him to be an enemy agent, killed him. Other Diwana Fakirs living near the village resented it. About 50 of them, led by their abbots, Ghudha and Sukhu, marched against the Guru with sticks, and long and short axes in their hands, for the sake of seeking revenge. Some one told them on the way that the Guru had hundreds of armed Sikhs with him and that it would not be possible for them to face the Guru's strength. This terrified them and, except for the two abbots, all left in batches. These two i.e. Ghuda ann Sukhu, who could play on Sarangi had brought their instruments with them. But as they approached the Guru they hid their instruments. The Guru's look silenced their turbulent minds. When they were asked to bring their instruments also and play on them, they realised the Guru's intuitional powers. They sang the following jungle song in a loud voice and in a tune which the Guru asked them to correct once or twice ;

ਕੱਚਾ ਕੋਠਾ, ਵਿਚ ਵਸਦਾ ਜਾਨੀ । ਸਦਾ ਨ ਮਾਪੇ, ਨਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੁਆਨੀ ।
ਚਲਣਾ ਆਗੇ, ਹੋਇ ਗੁਮਾਨੀ । ਹੋਹੁ ਸਿਆਣਾ, ਨਹੀਂ ਪਗੁ ਸਿਦਾਨੀ ।*

(In this mortal frame resides the beloved. Neither parents nor youth will last forever. Far away is man's destination, but he is filled with ego. Let him become wise and tread on straight path).

The Guru was pleased at their performance and at the change in their intentions. Both of them knew that the Guru had once donned blue clothes and sat on a cot as 'Uch Ka Pir'. They requested him to do the same once again and give them an opportunity to carry the cot on their shoulders. The Guru had to oblige them and, while carrying the cot, along with two other Sikhs, they were filled with ecstasy. At the time of departing, the Guru gave them a four-cornered rupee and told them to preserve it with them to be able to continue to enjoy that ecstasy.

TOWARDS SABO KI TALWANDI

From Mukatsar, the Guru had started taking the south-eastern direction. He had passed through Rupana, Gurusar, Chatiana, Chandgram, Sehrhi, Rohela and Babiha villages. A few miles further on he came to Jassi village where there was a tank the historic significance of which had been forgotten by the people. The Guru entered the tank on his horseback, with blue-coloured clothes on. This surprised the Sikhs as well as the local people. On inquiry, the Guru explained that the tank was hallowed by the visit of Sri Ram Chander who used to take bath in it. The Guru's action was intended to revive its importance. The people were all the more surprised when they found the colour of the Guru's clothes and that of his horse changed.

On coming out of the tank, the Guru uttered the following words three times :

ਜੱਸੀ ਆਏ ਚਲੇ । ਗੜ ਖਾਏ ਚਲੇ ।**

(We came to Jassi and will depart after taking jaggery).

Soon, a Labaana Sikh, who was a dealer in jaggery, brought a cart-load of the article and presented the entire

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 18, Chaupai 42).
** "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 19).

quantity to the Guru. He accepted the same and asked every one to eat as much as he liked and also had it served to the horses as a feed. The Guru stayed in that village for one night only and on the following morning reached Pucca Gram.

WELCOME FROM DALLA

Dalla was a well-known headman of that area. He came, along with 400 men, to Pucca Gram in advance to welcome the Guru. After paying homage, Dalla invited the Guru to come and stay in the town of Sabo Ki Talwandi. The Guru came down from the horse and all sat down on the ground waiting for the remaining Sikhs and rest of the paraphernalia to arrive. The Guru enquired from Dalla about his welfare and that of his clan. While thanking the Guru for his blessings and expressing sympathy at all that had happened, Dalla said :

"O True King, the Mughals have been very unfair, deceitful, and cruel towards you. You were forced to vacate Anandpur, your family got separated and your four sons became martyrs. It is a matter of pain and regret that you did not remember me in such difficult times; otherwise all my fighting men would have reached and chastised the enemy and not allowed so much loss to have taken place".

The Guru appreciated his words of sympathy and replied,

"God's will was like that. The sacrifices made in the cause of righteousness and the country's honour will fructify one day. To repent now will be of no avail. To kill or be killed in the battle field is inevitable. It all had to happen in that manner."

Dalla, to further express his sympathy, continued :

"Sir, whatever you have said is correct but we are also your Sikhs. You could have sent a message through some one and I, along with my men, would have come to your aid immediately. All the loss, now incurred could have been avoided or minimised."

The Guru again told Dalla :

"Time once gone by cannot return, nor can the loss

once incurred be replenished." But Dalla continued to express his sorrow at what had happened. The Guru heard all what he said and changed the subject. He was then sitting amidst the congregation and preaching to those assembled, including Dalla and his men.

Meanwhile, some mechanics who were arms manufacturers of Lahore arrived and placed before the Guru a number of guns of varied designs which they had brought with them. The Guru handled some of them and liked one double-barrelled gun which he wanted to test by aiming at some one. He asked Dalla sitting close by to bring two of his stalwarts for the purpose. But Dalla, feeling perplexed, could not give any reply. Some of his followers also slipped away lest they might be named by Dalla. The Guru repeated the request but Dalla remained sitting with eyes downcast. At that time, the Guru asked one of his disciples sitting nearby to go and tell the two Sikhs standing at a distance and tying their turbans that the Guru wanted to aim a gun at some body and had called one of them for the purpose. Both of them, with turbans in hands, came running and vying with each other to be the first to serve as a target. To solve the piquant situation, the Guru asked both of them to stand side by side, and let the bullet go over their heads without hitting them.

The Guru was very much pleased with those two Sikhs and blessed them. He told Dalla :

"Look, I want brave Sikhs like these. Such men were with me then also. They died after killing many. But your men slipped away on hearing the sound of guns. Do you think I wanted to kill anyone ? Your men, if they had been with me at that time also, would have run away and brought disgrace. My followers here even now are of the same calibre and courage and are not afraid of death."

Dalla felt ashamed, and, bowing before the Guru, requested him to shift to his fortress in the town for residence and stay there as long as he liked.

IN SABO KI TALWANDI

By that time, the Ranghar horsemen in the rear had also arrived. The Guru got on his horseback and proceeded

towards the town. Inspite of Dalla's insistence to stay inside the fortress, the Guru preferred to set up his camp outside the town. After the battle of Mukatsar, there had been no opportunity to fight with the Mughals. The Guru, perhaps, had an inkling that the letter written by him from Dina to Aurangzeb had a salutary effect on the emperor and he had instructed the Governor of Sirhind and others not to pursue the Guru any longer. This is corroborated by the following evidence* quoted by Dr. Ganda Singh :

"On receiving the Zafar Nama, the emperor had a letter written to his minister, Muniam Khan, in Delhi and sent it through Mohd. Beg (mace-bearer) and Sheikh Yar Mohd. (munsibdar). In that letter the emperor wrote to the minister that he should try to make the Guru agree to come to Delhi and then apprise him of the imperial order. Then he should arrange to send him (the Guru), along with a munsibdar, to the emperor.

"It was also written in the letter that when the Guru might reach Sirhind, Muniam Khan should depute a known person to accompany him and see him safely through that area. Muniam Khan was also instructed to keep the Guru in good humour and give him as much money as he needed for the journey, from out of his confiscated property".

It is possible that the gist of this letter might have been communicated to the Guru by Muniam Khan in order to make him agreeable to come to Delhi. But the Guru was not willing to go to Delhi yet, although he had come to know, directly or indirectly, about the change in the emperor's attitude. That seemed to have been the basis of the Guru's telling Dalla that he would camp outside the town of Sabo Ki Talwandi, as there might be some further occasion to fight with the Mughals.

According to Sikh chronologists, it was at Sabo Ki Talwandi that Guru Gobind Singh untied his waistband after a period of nearly one and quarter years and breathed a sigh of relief. That is why Sabo Ki Talwandi is known as Damdama Sahib (the place of taking rest).

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* "Sikh Itehas Bare", p. 39, on the authority of 'Inayat-Ullah Ismi's "Ahkam-i-Alamgiri", pages 429-30 and 510.

The Ranghar horsemen were camped near the Guru's tent, whereas the Khalsa soldiers set up their camp near the fortress. Dalla arranged for preparation of meals inside the fortress but the Ranghars were supplied dry provisions to enable them to cook their own food near their tents as desired by them. The Guru approved of these arrangements.

MATA SUNDRI JI AND MATA SAHIB DEVI ARRIVE FROM DELHI

Several days had passed in the peaceful atmosphere of Sabo Ki Talwandi. The Guru now thought of enquiring about the welfare of Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi who were languishing in Delhi after separation from the Guru at Chamkaur. He sent two reliable Sikhs to Delhi to bring them, without revealing as to what had happened to their sons and mother-in-law. He also sent messages to other Sikhs living in near and far-off places, as well as to those musicians who used to recite *gurbani* and divine music in the Guru's presence in Anandpur. They all came thronging even from distant places like Poonch (Kashmir). But when they heard about all the tragic events, which had taken place eversince the Guru left Anandpur, and saw with their own eyes the pitiable condition of living as a refugee in contrast with the glorious days of Anandpur, they could not withhold their tears. They were filled with pain and anguish, particularly when they came to know of the martyrdom of all the four sons of the Guru as well as of his mother, Mata Gujri Ji. The Guru consoled them saying that they were God's trust which had gone back to Him, enshrined in eternal glory. In their absence, thousands of Sikhs surrounding him were like his sons, he told them.

With the arrival of large numbers of Sikhs, regular congregations began to be held in Sabo Ki Talwandi, both in mornings and in evenings. It was in one of those congregations that Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi arrived from Delhi, accompanied by the two Sikhs. With downcast faces and eyes full of tears, they fell at the Guru's feet. The Guru consoled them and blessed them by placing his hands on the heads of both of them. After being seated in the congregation on the left side of the Guru, they looked

around but could not see their sons anywhere. All eyes were now turned towards them, full of respect and sympathy. Mata Sundri Ji could not control herself and, with folded hands, enquired from the Guru where the four sons and Mata Gujri Ji were. The Guru realised the emotional and disturbed feelings of Mata Sundri Ji but kept silent for a few moments. Then he waved his hands towards all the Sikhs present and said :—

"ਇਨ ਪੁਤਰਨ ਕੇ ਸੀਸ ਪੈ ਵਾਰ ਦੀਏ ਸੁਤ ਚਾਰ ।
ਚਾਰ ਮੂਏ ਤੋ ਕਿਆ ਹੂਆ ਜੀਵਤ ਕਈ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ।"

(I have sacrificed the four sons for the sake of all these Sikhs who are like my own sons. What, if four have been lost when thousands of them are alive !)

What effect those words had on the ladies and the Sikhs only they could tell. Similarly, in frank but courageous tone, the Guru informed them about the martyrdom of Mata Gujri Ji and advised them to bear the loss with resignation to the Divine Will.

Then, again, addressing Mata Sundri Ji, the Guru consoled her with the following words :

"You should not feel so sorrowful, for your son (referring to Sahibzada Ajit Singh) was brave. He has gone to heavens and has been honoured by the gods.

During their stay in Sabo Ki Talwandi, Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi preferred to remain close to the Guru instead of being housed inside the fortress, as desired by Dalla. So, the Guru had a separate tent put up near his own where the two ladies stayed. Their meals also were sent by Dalla, along with those of the Guru. After a few days, the kitchen run inside the fortress was closed and a separate *guru ka langar* was started near the Guru's camp.

RE-WRITING OF THE ADI GRANTH

After the arrival of Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi, more and more Sikhs came to Sabo Ki Talwandi and offered their condolences to them. Soon, the peaceful atmosphere of the place changed to an atmosphere of sorrow. To alter the trend, the Guru once deliberately told the congregation that it was his desire to see the spiritual light

of Guru Nanak. Some of the Sikhs sitting nearby pointed out that the Guru himself was the tenth Guru Nanak, so what was the need for expressing such a desire. In reply, the Guru gave the following clarification :

"As the Sikh congregation, you are also the image of Guru. Your concept is correct but I have in mind the spiritual light in *gurbani* which Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru Nanak, had compiled with the help of Bhai Gurdas. To see it, read it and then think over what is written therein is what I desire, so that the souls of those who have become martyrs might rest in peace and those who remain might derive consolation therefrom. That sacred volume is now lying with the descendents of Sodhi Dhir Mal in Kartarpur. We have to bring it from there with due respect."

On hearing this, some Sikhs who had come from Doaba and a few others of Malwa got ready to execute that task. After travelling for a few days, they reached Kartarpur (near Jalandhar). They went straight to the Sodhis (who also called themselves Gurus) and, with due respect, conveyed to them Guru Gobind Singh's desire. It was emphasised that, just as after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev and the demise of Mata Ganga Ji, Guru Hargobind Sahib had the scripture recited by Bhai Buddha, similarly, Guru Gobind Singh desired to arrange its recitation for the peace of those who had sacrificed themselves for the protection of *dharma.*

But this had no effect on the Sodhis. They thought that after having lost everything, Guru Gobind Singh now wanted to snatch away the scripture by making some pretence. They, therefore, refused to comply with the request. It is possible that, if Dhir Mal had been alive, he might have agreed, out of mature thought, to part with the volume for the purpose required.

Sodhi Dhir Mal was the son of Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind and, therefore, Guru Gobind Singh's uncle in relationship. So Dhir Mal and Guru Gobind Singh were cousin brothers. The volume of Granth Sahib at Kartarpur was received by Guru Har Rai, in inheritence from Guru Hargobind. The former passed it on to Guru

Harkishan and after the latter's demise it remained in that family in the custody of Dhir Mal.

Dhir Mal died in 1677 A.D. When the Sikhs came to Kartarpur in 1706 A.D. the volume was available with Dhir Mal's grandsons. They remembered the enemity Dhir Mal had with Guru Tegh Bahadur on the question of succession after Guru Hargobind. Inspite of the repeated assurance given by the Sikhs that the volume would be returned safely in the same condition, the Sodhis were adamant. On the other hand, they tauntingly remarked, "If Gobind Singh calls himself a Guru, let him compile his own Granth, just as Guru Arjan Dev had compiled it once." The Sikhs felt sorry at those remarks and returned empty-handed to report the matter to the Guru. On hearing what the Sodhis had said, the Guru thought deeply over the matter, for a complicated question had arisen before him.

THE COMPLICATED QUESTION

Whether to re-write the Adi Granth or not was the complicated question which the Sodhis of Kartarpur had raised before the Guru and that too in a taunting manner, thus challenging his very guruship. The following points would need consideration in this connection. There is no doubt that Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth Guru Nanak in whom the same *jot* (spirit) prevailed. He had ascended the Guru's throne in regular line of succession after Guru Tegh Bahadur. Many writers and annotators have confirmed this concept in their writings, e.g.

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੂਰਨ ਗੁਰ ਅਵਿਤਾਰ ।

(Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh are perfect Guru incarnations).

The story in the Janamsakhi that Guru Nanak prophesised the redemption of Mula Khatri of Sialkot in his tenth form was proved true when Guru Gobind Singh (the tenth Guru Nanak) shot a hare near Shikar Ghat in Nanded (Deccan) to grant salvation to Mula who had taken birth as that hare. Had Guru Gobind Singh not decided to re-write the Adi Granth, his guruship would have been doubted by the Sikhs. Moreover, he himself had written in Bachittar

Natak that all the ten Gurus should be deemed as having the same *jot* (spirit).

(2) Sikh history records that the child Guru, Guru Harkishan, had verses of the Gita explained by a dumb water-carrier by the touch of his stick on his head. Similar events are known to have happened in the life times of almost all the Sikh Gurus. The challenge thrown by the Sodhis had, therefore, to be accepted in order to confirm the belief of the Sikhs in the competence of the Guru, particularly after so many sacrifices had taken place.

(3) After the death of the Guru's sons and, in the absence of any authorised volume of the scripture, the Sodhis would never have shown the Adi Granth in their possession to Amritdhari Sikhs. In that case, the whole history of Khalsa Brotherhood could have taken a different turn.

(4) There was a danger that Dhir Mal's descendants would, in due course of time, set up their own gurudom by owning the Adi Granth as their own personal property. In the Granth, itself, *shabad* or *bani* had been declared as the Guru. This was a ready plea available to them for owning guruship. This they did try to do for some time but after the Sikh Raj was established and the authorised Damdami Bir (volume) was available as the spiritual guide of the Sikhs, the Sodhis had to remain in the background and be content with showing the Adi Granth to whosoever came to see it.*

THE AUTHOR'S VIEW

After the martyrdom of the Guru's sons, there was no deserving individual in Sodhi family whom Guru Gobind Singh could appoint as his successor. On the other hand, Bibi Bhani, daughter of Guru Amar Das and wife of Guru Ram Das, had taken the pledge from her revered father that guruship would thenceforward remain in Sodhi family. This

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* Note : This practice is followed even now and the Sodhis show the Adi Granth on every *Sangrand* (beginning of a month in the Indian calendar) to whosoever goes to Kartarpur for this purpose—Tr.

predicament compelled Guru Gobind Singh to re-write the Adi Granth for the spiritual guidance of the Sikhs after his demise. Had he not done so, the descendents of Dhir Mal would have easily misled the simple-minded Sikhs, particularly the Punjab peasantry, by making false propaganda about their guruship through their own missionaries. Keeping all these factors into consideration, the Guru announced his decision to re-write the holy Granth. A separate tent was set up for the purpose and arrangements were made to collect paper and ink. According to historical records, the Guru, after morning ablutions, would enter the tent in the early hours of the morning and dictate the *bani* to Bhai Mani Singh, seated behind a curtain in the same tent, for nearly six hours every day. This strenuous but inspiring practice continued for nearly three months until the whole scripture comprising 1430 pages was completed from beginning to end, through the spiritual and intuitional powers of the great Guru.*

The Guru was immensely pleased when this stupendous task was completed. He arranged an *Akhand Path* (continuous reading) of the whole Granth, which he heard with rapt attention in the presence of forty other Sikhs. Thereafter, he himself offered the prayer in memory of all the martyrs and had the customary *karah prasad* distributed and *langar* served to all. As long as the Guru stayed in Talwandi he daily explained the teachings of *gurbani* to the congregations through his discourses. This tradition was later on continued by Bhai Mani Singh by organising *taksal*** in which *katha* or discourses became a regular feature.

The compilation of the new volume of the Granth at Damdama Sahib was indeed an achievement of great significance. It gave an opportunity to the Guru to include in it the compositions of the minth Nanak, Guru Tegh Bahadur, which the Sodhis of Kartarpur might not have agreed to do

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* cf. "Guru Gobind Singh" by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 77.

**Literally meaning a mint, but here it denotes a school in which higher spiritual education is imparted. We have at present a number of such institutions functioning among the Sikhs (see "Mahan Kosh"—Tr.).

in the volume available with them on account of animosity harboured by them against the ninth Guru on the question of succession to guruship.

*DAMDAMI BIR**

The volnme of the Granth written by Bhai Mani Singh at Damdama Sahib was taken by the Guru along with him to Nanded. It remained there for the congregation to see and worship till the end of the Guru's life time. As to where it was taken thereafter cannot be said with any certainty. No written evidence is available to show that the volume taken to Nanded was sent back to Damdama Sahib to Bhai Mani Singh or any other copy was prepared by any one at Nanded. It is, therefore, reasonable to think that while the Guru was dictating the *bani* at Damdama Sahib, two copies were prepared simultaneously—one by Bhai Mani Singh and the other by Bhai Gurdas II who was a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh. Alternatively, the second volume must have also been prepared by Bhai Mani Singh and retained there for reading and worship. It was the volume available at Damdama Sahib that was pronounced as the spiritual Guru of the Sikhs. That is why it is known as 'Damdami Bir' and all printed copies are shown as having been transcribed from it. Later on, Baba Dip

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* Regarding the actual mode of re-writing this 'Bir' or volume, many writers think that the Guru must have collected some old copies of the Adi Granth or portions thereof from the Sikhs. But no such evidence is available. The Guru had left behind all the literature he had at the time of leaving Chamkaur and come away emptry-handed. The only known copy to be available was 'Bhai Bano Wali Bir', which was in Mangat (district Gujrat in West Punjab) at a distance of about 500 K.M. from Sabo Ki Talwandi. It was called as 'Khari Bir' by Guru Arjan Dev on account of some additions made therein by Bhai Bano. The fact that the Guru sent his Sikhs to Kartarpur shows that he had no other copies or portions thereof available with him. It is, therefore, the author's confirmed view that the volume was re-written by the Guru by dint of his intuition and spiritual powers—Tr.

Singh prepared four copies in manuscript therefrom and sent them to the four Takhts (seats of authority) at Amritsar, Anandpur, Patna and Hazur Sahib (Nanded). The volume of the Adi Granth available with the Sodhis of Kartarpur is kept in Shish Mahal building there. They have been using it as a source of income and have not allowed anyone to make any copy thereof.* After Guru Gobind Singh had got the new volume prepared, the Sodhis realised their mistake. Since then, they have received the baptism of the double-edged sword and joined the mainstream of Khalsa Brotherhood. Some of them tried to transcribe surreptitiously Guru Gobind Singh's signature on their volume but to no avail.

ON HUNTING EXPEDITIONS

After being free from the task of compiling the new Adi Granth, Guru Gobind Singh was requested by several Brar Jats to visit their villages on hunting expeditions. The Guru agreed and asked for necessary preparations to be made. When they were about to start, a woman from Chabba village in Majha came and stood in the Guru's way. She loudly spoke the following couplet :

ਬਿਨੈਂ ਕਰੇਂਦੀ ਵੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅੱਗੇ ।
ਸੋਹਣੀ ਦਾਹੜੀ ਬੀਬੀ ਪੱਗੇ ।
ਗੋਤ ਵੜਾਇਚ ਪਿੰਡ ਹੈ ਚੱਬੇ ।
ਖਾਲੀ ਚਲੀ ਜੇ ਇਕ ਫਲ ਲੱਗੇ ।

(I, who belong to Warraich caste and have come from Chabba village, have one request to make before Guru Gobind Singh, who sports a beautiful beard and wears a nice turban. I am issueless and seek the boon of one son).

On hearing the couplet for the second time, the Guru was pleased and blessed the woman by granting her the

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* In 1861 A.D., i.e. 154 years after the compilation of the 'Damdami Bir', Sodhi Sadhu Singh, great grandson of Dhir Mal is reported to have got one copy of the 'Kartarpuri Wali Bir' prepared, which he presented to Queen Victoria and received a letter of thanks for doing so.
("Tazkra-i-Raussai" p. 256)

boon of seven sons instead of one.*

On that particular day, the hunting party could not kill any prey. The Guru enquired if any Sikh in the party and had not dressed his hair properly on that day. One Sikh admitted his fault, at which the Guru said :

ਹੋਇ ਸੁਚੇਤ ਸਕਲ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰੇ । ਚੱਢਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਉਚਾਰੇ ।
ਕਾਰਜ ਸਰਬ ਸਿਧ ਹੋਇ ਜਾਂਤੇ । ਨਹਿ ਦੋਨੂੰ ਬਿਨਾ ਕਹਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਤੇ ।**

(Before going out, one should dress up cleanly after taking bath etc. and say his prayers before leaving. Then only will his tasks be accomplished).

THE LUCKY AND THE UNLUCKY

Bhai Bhagtu, son of Bhai Adam, was a venerable Sikh of the days of Guru Ram Das. His grandson, Dayal Das, son of Bhai Gaura Ji, of Bhuchogram came to see the Guru with some money as present. The Guru asked him to be baptised and become a full-fledged Singh. But he preferred to remain as he was inspite of the Guru's repeated persuasion. His son, Gurbakhsh Singh, however, became a Singh. He was the predecessor of the Rajas of Kaithal, with whom Kavi Santokh Singh stayed and completed his "Suraj Prakash".

Two other grandsons of Bhai Bhagtu and sons of Bhai Jiwan, also came to see the Guru and were lucky enough to receive the baptism. In fact, Bhai Jiwan had two wives. The other two grandsons from the second wife also became full-fledged Singhs. The first two brothers were named Bhai Ram Singh and Bhai Fateh Singh and the second two brothers were known as Bhai Bakhtu Singh and Bhai Takhtu Singh.

BHAI GODRIA BLESSED

Bhai Godria was a recluse who remained occupied with

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 21). There is a similar story in the life of Guru Hargobind when Mai Sulakhani held up the reins of the Guru's horse and sought the boon of one son. She was also similarly blessed with seven sons—Tr.

** "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 21).

reciting Japji throughout the day. As time passed, he acquired some miraculous powers. Whatever he said came to be true. He used to live with Bhai Gaura Ji, sons of Bhai Bhagtu, and work for the former on odd jobs. Later on, he left Bhai Gaura Ji's service and came to reside with his three sons. They too would keep him engaged on domestic and field duties and not allow him to meditate.

He came to the Guru and, inspite of his supernatural powers, sat at the Guru's feet and soon got absorbed in meditation. The Guru noticed his unusual and saintly behaviour and blessed him, saying "during our long stay in this area, I have not come across any person who is so much steeped in meditation and renunciation as Bhai Godria. He is a greet soul !"

It was at that time that Mai Bhago, who had accompanied the Guru from Mukatsar, appeared in the congrega- with only *kachehra* (underwear) on her body. The Guru spoke to her as follows :

"Mai Bhago ! No doubt you are pure and noble at heart but in our congregations it is desirable that you should come properly dressed, with a small turban on your head and a *chaddar* (sheet of cloth) around your body." Mai Bhago bowed before the Guru and agreed to do so in future.

DALLA WARNED BY GOVERNOR OF SIRHIND

Once when the Sikhs had assembled in a congregation, Dalla brought a letter of warning received by him from the Governor of Sirhind. It read as follows :

"Guru Gobind Singh, who has killed lakhs of Mughal and hill chieftains' soldiers and has not been captured, is reported to be staying with you in Talwandi. You should know that he is a rebel and it is proper for you to have him arrested. This will be in your own interest also, otherwise the army will march against you and capture you as well as the Guru or kill both of you."

Dalla also read out the reply that he had sent to the Governor. The following were the wordings of that reply :

"The Guru is our life and soul. We cannot surrender him without fighting with his enemies. If you send your

army, we will challenge it and kill your soldiers even if we may have to leave our homes and take shelter in jungles where you will not get even a drop of water."

The Guru was greatly pleased at the holdness of Dalla's reply and blessed him.

One day the Guru and his two wives, along with some Sikhs, went out to see the fort of Bhatinda. On the way, he stopped at Chak Gram, where Bhai Ram Singh, son of Bhai Jiwan, who had earlier taken the baptism, had arranged for the Guru's rest under the thick shade of *pipal* trees, with the surrounding land watered to make it cool. The Guru liked the place and remembered the days spent in Paunta on the bank of the Jamuna river. Arrangement for providing rest to the ladies' was made in Bhai Ram Singh's home where food was prepared and served to all.

Bhai Ram Singh had a stepmother who was a devotee of the Guru. She had prepared a *khes* (bedsheet) with her own hands and was waiting outside the door of her house for presenting it to the Guru. The Guru anticipated her desire and, to the surprise of all, went aside from the normal route to accept the present. Bhai Ram Singh also presented to the Guru Rupees one hundred in cash and a horse of good breed, complete with saddle and other trappings.

BHAI DAYAL DAS FORGIVEN

From Chak Gram, the Guru came to Bhucho village where Dayal Das, who had earlier refused to take the baptism, lived. The Guru's horse was thirsty but it would not drink water from the pond located near the village. The Guru explained that the horse was disinclined to drink that water because it was somewhat dirty and also because it smelled of the presence of some *massand* in the village. This news reached Dayal Das. He came and requested the Guru to rest for the night in his house. But the Guru showed his indifference and decided to move forward towards Bhagu Gram. Thereupon, Bhai Ram Singh advised Dayal Das to prepare a large quantity of *karah prasad* and offer it to the Guru on the way and seek his forgiveness. He acted accordingly and also expressed his desire to be baptised.

The Guru accepted the offer of *karah prasad* and, after the baptismal ceremony, renamed Dayal Das as Dayal Singh.* He also then accepted the offer of one horse and one woollen shawl made by Dayal Singh and stayed with him for the night.

THE FORT IN BHATINDA

The fort in Bhatinda was dreaded by all for the suspected existence of evil spirits there which tormented the people and the animals who went inside the fort. But the Guru's arrival and stay inside the fort suppressed such evil spirits, if there were any, which never dared to trouble the people again.

During the night, some traders came and camped outside near the wall of the fort. One of them sang some couplets from 'Sassi-Punnu'** in loud and melodious tune. The Guru liked the voice and heard it attentively. In the morning, he called the trader and asked him to sing again. But he was disinclined to do so, merely out of shame. The Guru had a partition set up to enable him to overcome the feeling of shame. Although he sang again but the tune was not so attractive as during the night. Still the Guru gave him some reward before sending him away.

Some Sikhs objected to the patronising of such worldly love stories but the Guru explained that such stories were based on true love and only true love is acceptable in divine court. The people remember and will continue to be inspired by these stories for centuries.

From there, the Guru went to Sammi village where he was received and served with great enthusiasm by the people. He rested there also for the night.

BACK TO DAMDAMA SAHIB

On his way back to Damdama Sahib, the Guru shot one galloping deer with his arrow. On inquiry by the Sikhs he told them that the deer was the Guru's treasurer in his past

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 23 and 25) and Bhai Vir Singh's comments thereon.

**A Punjabi folk-lore and a love story.

life. But he used to misappropriate the money. He did not desist from the practice in spite of several warnings. After death he had taken birth as a deer and had thus received the necessary punishment at the Guru's hands. Such is the destiny of the persons who are not faithful to their masters.

In Talwandi, there had been no rains for the past several months. Human beings, animals and birds were all feeling miserable on account of draught. They came for help to the Guru who advised them to pray to the Almighty God who would satisfy their wants. They all went back to their homes and offered individual and collective prayers. In a short time, there were heavy rain showers and the entire area was filled with water. Such was the power of prayer.

SEVERAL THOUSAND SIKHS BAPTISED IN MALWA

After the rains, the entire Malwa region was caught in the grip of malaria. Due to high fever, people became weak and nervous. They approached the Guru for suggesting some remedial measures. The Guru smiled and said, "Heat has greater effect on naked heads. Why don't you tie turbans on your heads by becoming full-fledged Singhs and reciting *gurbani* regularly with love and devotion ?" Many people adopted this course and received the baptism of double-edged sword. Others also, who came to Talwandi from distant places, followed suit According to Trumpp, quoted by Dr. Gopal Singh,* the Guru administered the baptism to nearly one lakh and twenty thousand persons in Talwandi alone.

Out of those, who came from distant places to receive the baptism, three outstanding figures were :

1. *Sant Baba Pheru Singh of Attock (district Hazara)*

At the time of Baisakhi of 1699 A D., one Bhagat Pheru Ji had come to Anandpur. He was baptised, along with other Sikhs, and he went back to meditate on God's Name and do missionary work. He preached in hilly areas upto Kashmir and converted many people to Sikh faith. He was now Bhai Pheru Singh and, as such, came, along with many other devotees, to pay homage to the Guru in Talwandi.

* "Guru Gobind Singh" p. 78.

Among them was Sant Punjab Singh who, after Bhai Pheru Singh's demise, became the Pracharak Jathedar of his area now in Pakistan.

2. *Sant Baba Punjab Singh*

He was born in 1672 A.D. in Nand Harh Shahr of Pakistan in the house of Hari Ram Shah. He was six years younger to Guru Gobind Singh but was very diligent in learning Sanskrit and Persian. That is why the Guru had entrusted him with missionary work after Bhai Pheru Singh. His parents had married him as they wanted him to live as a householder and do the ancestral money-lending business. But he had a different bent of mind. After succeeding Bhai Pheru Singh, he started missionary work in Muzzafrabad area of Kashmir. He was a saint-soldier and always kept a band of two to three hundred Sikhs with him. He even went upto Poonch, Srinagar (Kashmir) and Mattan to do missionary work among the Kashmiris and Pundits. Ultimately, he passed away in 1736 A.D. after making Sant Rocha Singh as his successor.

3. *Sant Bhai Rocha Singh*

Sant Baba Punjab Singh had selected an 18 years old brahman youth, named Rocha Ji, as one of his followers. That young man was very much impressed with the saint-cum-soldier like appearance of his mentor. He expressed his keen desire to take the baptism of Guru Gobind Singh but his mentor postponed the visit to Anandpur for one reason or the other. Ultimately, young Rocha Ji went to Anandpur alone. He was tall and handsome and, when he presented himself before the Guru, he humbly explained his antecedants and the purpose of his visit. He wanted to be administered the baptism and converted into a Singh in the same manner as had been done in the case of his mentor, Sant Baba Punjab Singh. The Guru was greatly pleased to see him. He had before him an ardent seeker of the baptism, who, unlike other brahmins, had come all the way from Kashmir to Malwa after traversing nearly 400 miles over hills, jungles and sandy plains.

The Guru gave him the dress and arms of a Singh with his own hands, and, after baptising him, named him Rocha Singh. He was instructed to contemplate on God's Name himself and also spread the Guru's teachings among others by inviting them to receive the baptism as he had done. Bhai Rocha Singh expressed his difficulty in doing missionary work among the *brahmins* of his area who were caste-minded and proud. The Guru blessed him and told him to go ahead fearlessly and every thing would be alright.

Born in 1688 A.D. in village Kaunsa (distt. Hazara) in the house of Punjaba *brahmin* of *rism* sub-caste, Sant Rocha Singh came under the influence of Sant Baba Punjab Singh at the age of 14 years. He was baptised when he was 19 years old. After the demise of Sant Baba Punjab Singh, he found it difficult to perform the duties of a *mahant* in a *dera* and also act as the Guru's missionary. He, therefore, left the *dera* and went for meditation to a solitary place on Salkot hill, nearly 5 miles to the west of Baramula (Srinagar). The place where he meditated has a gurdwara known as Tapiana Sahib built in his memory.

Sant Rocha Singh had attained the stage when the words spoken by him came to be true. His very look fulfilled the wishes of the people. The brahmins who used to worship stones came to adore him as *thakur*. That is why he, later on, became popular all over the area as Sant Thakur Bhai Rocha Singh. He not only did missionary work in Kashmir but also went to Hazara, N.W.F.P. and Pothohar where he converted thousands of persons to Sikhism and built gurdwaras for holding congregations. The foundation stone of the first Panchayati Gurdwara in the author's village, Nara, was laid by Sant Bhai Rocha Singh. He lived upto the ripe old age of 115 years and died at his own place in Rawla Kot in Poonch in 1803 A.D. His photo has been put up in the Sikh Museum at Amritsar and the Jammu and Kashmir Government has built Sant 'Rocha Singh Nagar' near Jammu in his memory.

After Sant Bhai Rocha Singh, the following three outstanding personalities carried on the missionary work in their assigned areas :

1. The first was Bhai Hakikat Singh who was the son of Sant Mota Singh, the younger brother of Sant Bhai Rocha Singh. He was assigned the area of Tehsil Bag of Muzzafrabad, where, with his spiritual powers, he converted a large number of persons into Sikhs. He was followed by his son, Sant Jit Singh, who did missionary work for a number of years. He had four sons, Bhai Hira Singh, Bhai Pratap Singh, Bhai Puran Singh and Bhai Hardit Singh who continued to live in Rawal Kot. Their sons are now residing in Sant Rocha Singh Nagar, near Jammu.

2. The second person was Sant Mela Singh, who was a learned scholar, well-versed in meditative practice. He was sent towards the north in Poonch area where he spread education and preached Sikh religion from his headquarters at Nagali, near Poonch. After him, Mahant Mohar Singh and now Mahant Bachittar Singh have been carrying on the work in a spirit of dedication.

3. The third well-known figure was Sant Balla Singh. He was deputed to do missionary work in Majha tract of the Punjab. He set up his centre of activity in Khadur Sahib and endeared himself to the people of Majha. There is a place built in his memory in that town.

SECOND LETTER OF WARNING TO DALLA

The Governor of Sirhind was not happy at the freedom with which Guru Gobind Singh moved about in Malwa. He wanted, somehow, to capture the Guru, so that he might not reveal to the emperor all the atrocities he (the Governor) had eommitted. He, therefore, sent another letter of warning to Dalla in which he demanded the Guru's surrender and in case of failure he (Dalla) was to be dealt with severely. Dalla replied to the Governor, saying that his life and death were bound up with the Guru and that he was prepared to fight with the Governor's army, if necessary.

MOCK FIGHT ARRANGED

The Sikhs coming from West Punjab reported to the Guru that they had been looted on their way by the Subedar

of Lahore. Similarly, another group of Sikhs who came to see the Guru informed him that, while passing near Sirhind, the Subedar of that place robbed them of whatever they were bringing as presents for the Guru. This enraged the Guru who told them "Look, whoever comes brings the news that he has been robbed. Has any one of you ever informed me that you have also looted the property of the Subedar. Listen, Khalsa Ji ! I am now telling you frankly that the first nine Gurus had been following the policy of keeping peace and concentrating on rememberance of God and service of mankind which have been the sheet-anchors of Sikh religion. From now onwards, after hearing such stories, I am going to make you read 'Chandi Ka Path' and arm you with fighting weapons. Whoever takes the baptism of the double-edged sword and becomes a full-fledged Singh, will achieve victory. He has to respect and preserve the *keshas* which are my symbol."

To infuse them with war-like spirit, the Guru arranged a mock-fight between the Brar Sikhs, armed with lathis, on one side, and the rest of the Sikhs on the other side. The Brars were asked to lead the attack and others were asked to defend themselves. As a result some persons were injured on both sides. The Guru watched the mock-fight from a distance and warned all to be always ready for fighting as well as for self-defence in the manner they had exhibited.

THE CONTENTED AND THE NOT SO CONTENTED

Once the Guru had a large quantity of pudding prepared and placed before all the Sikhs to snatch and eat it as much as they liked. Most of the Sikhs, fell upon it like a prey but there were others who stayed back from the skirmish as they were contented with their due share in distribution. The Guru noticed it and said, "My Khalsa will be of both types, those who are contented with their due share and others who believe in grabbing the share of others but still have the love of Sikhism in their hearts."

On another occasion, the Guru had writing pens prepared and thrown in the tank in Damdama Sahib. On inquiry, the Guru prophesied that one day that place would

become a centre of learning for the Sikhs and will be known as Guru Ki Kashi. Efforts are now being made to set up a Gurmat Training Institute at Damdama Sahib.

DALLA BAPTISED

One night, Sardar Dalla came duly armed and stood guard where the Guru was sleeping. The Guru told him several times to go and take rest but he persisted in his self-imposed duty. The Guru felt pleased and asked Dalla to seek whatever boon he wanted. On hearing this, Dalla said, "Maharaj, I need only as much space near your resting place as is occupied by a *peehri* (low chair for ladies). The Guru told Dalla to take the baptism of the double-edged sword first. Dalla replied, "I have been taking remenants of your meals, touched with kirpan, as *prasad*. Is that not enough ?" The Guru laughed and told Dalla again, "Look ! my pleasure lies in your taking the baptism and becoming a full-fledged Singh."

ਜੋ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਖੰਡੇ ਕੋ ਲੈ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰ ਕੋ ਹੋ ਜਹਾਜ਼ ਚੱਢ ਜੈ ਹੈ।

(Whoever takes baptism of the double-edged sword will be owned by the Guru and will be able to cross the ocean of life).

Dalla agreed. He received the baptism at the Guru's hands and was renamed Dalla Singh. The Guru gave him a beautiful and heavy sword (along with shield); two golden bracelets studdied with gems, worth two thousand rupees; two turbans; two tunics and two pyjamas, which continued to be reverred in the family of Dalla Singh, long after the Guru left the world. According to Bhai Vir Singh, these articles are still available with the descendent of Dalla Singh.

ANCESTORS OF NABHA AND PATIALA RULERS BLESSED

One day when the Guru was sitting in the midst of the congregation, two Sikhs, Ram Singh and Trilok Singh, came with cart-loads of flour, pulses and other provisions for the Guru's kitchen. The Guru enquired if they had brought all

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 29).

the materials from their own homes or had purchased them from outside. They replied that whatever they had brought was from their own homes but some had been contributed by their relatives also. It was their keen desire to see the Guru that had brought them there.

Someone from the congregation told the Guru that those two persons were the same who had arranged the cremation of the two elder sons of the Guru after the battle of Chamkaur. On inquiry by the Guru, the two Sikhs narrated what had happened as follows :

"Sir, after the battle of Chamkaur was over and the Mughal and hill chieftains' soldiers had left, we searched for the dead bodies of Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh. Lest we might be detected, one of us started collecting firewood in anticipation and the other tore off his clothes and smeared them with mud so as to look like a mad man. The dead bodies they were in search of were lying buried under other bodies but we were able to locate and recognise them. As soon as the fire was ready we were able to arrange the cremation."

The Guru was very much pleased with that they had done and told them to ask anything they liked. Both of them, with folded hands, said that eversince they had come to that side of the country, they had not been able to settle down permanently on their own lands, like other tillers of the soil. The Guru sympathised with them and told them to rest assured that they will rule over vast tracts of lands and bring several villages towards Delhi and Lahore under their control. He kept them for seven days with him and at the time of leaving gave them two turbans as robes of honour. Later on, the descendants of Bhai Ram Singh and Bhai Trilok Singh became the rulers of the States of Nabha and Patiala, respectively.*

WORDS OF INTUITION

Once when the Guru was sitting on a high mound and many Sikhs, including Dalla Singh, were also present, the Guru looked around and appreciated the tall wheat stalks

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 29).

that were growing. On this, Dalla Singh and other Brars said, "Sir, it not wheat but *kai* (a kind of grass) that was growing there. Had it been wheat, the Mughal rulers would have demanded revenue from us. Here, the land produces only *moth* and *bajra*." The Guru kept silent.

On another occasion, and from the same high mound, the Guru, on looking around, exclaimed, "Look, how tall sugar-cane crops are standing in the fields." Again, the Brars could not understand the Guru's hint and said, "Sir, it is not sugar-cane crop but long grass that was growing there. We only need *moth* and *bajra* here."

Thereupon the Guru told them, "Had you not altered my words, the same crops, which are grown in Sirhind, would have been available to you here. You have not realised that Mughal rule is being destroyed and, in its place, the Khalsa Raj would exert itself. At that time, this land would yield large quantities of wheat. In the meantime, you will have to remain content witn *moth* and *bajra*. The Guru made this prophesy in 1705 A.D. and Bhai Santokh Singh had recorded it in 1843 A.D. i.e. 39 years before the Rupar Canal was opened by the British in 1882 A.D., with the joint efforts of the Malwa States. The whole of Malwa tract now presents a fertile spectacle and is productive of high yields of wheat and other crops.

Damdama Sahib, which was blessed by the long stay of Guru Gobind Singh, has now been declared as the fifth 'Takhat' or the seat of temporal authority of the Sikhs. It is at present under the control of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee an is and important place of Sikh pilgrimage. According to present indications, it will soon have an Institute of Gurmat Studies and will thus fulfil the prophesy of Guru Gobind Singh. With the untiring efforts of Sant Attar Singh of Mastuana and his devotees, a *pucca* tank, a beautiful gurdwara and several *bungas* (rest houses) have already been built at the place and a regular community kitchen has been started for the benefit of pilgrims.

KAPURA'S DEATH

In Damdama Sahib, ten Sikhs, who were associates of Kapura, came and informed the Guru about the death of

Kapura at the hands of the Mughals, as had been prophesied by the Guru. All those present in the congregation were surprised to hear the news. On inquiry by the Guru, they gave the following details :

"In Dhilwan, a fair is held every year in which Sodhi Kaul Ji is honoured by the devotees. After the battle of Mukatsar, when Sodhi Kaul Ji was sitting on his *gaddi* in the fair, many people came from the surrounding villages and offered their presents to him. Kapura also came along with several men. In the same manner, his rivals from Bargari village also arrived. After drinking bouts, men from both sides attacked each other with sticks, daggers and swords. To stop them from fighting, Kaul Ji sent Sri Ram, his great grandson (son of Abhai Ram), who first pushed back the Bargaris and then the followers of Kapura. One of the Kapura's men, who was drunk, shot at Sri Ram and killed him. Others took his dead body and brought it before Kaul Ji. The Sodhis got very much enraged and, with arms in hand, ran after those responsible for the murder.

"They started fighting but were overpowered by Kapura's men who outnumbered them. As a result, Sri Ram's younger brother also died. Both the dead brothers had to be cremated together. Abhai Ram could not tolerate the loss of both his sons and cursed Kapura that he would not only be hanged by the Mughals, as prophesied by the Guru, but his entire family would also be killed."

"After some time, Isa Khan Munjh, the ruler of Doaba and arch-enemy of the Sikhs, attacked Kapura and captured him from inside a grass store-room in his fortress. The invaders carried him away along with them but on the way thought that it would be no use wasting a bullet on him. Instead, he was hanged from a tree and, according to his own desire, his face was plastered with mud to remind him about his refusal to accept the Guru's words. His family was also murdered by the Mughals."

All the Sikhs, who heard that tragic story, recalled that had Kapura complied with the Guru's wishes, he would not have met such a miserable end. On the other hand, his name would have been remembered and honoured in history.

INVITATION FROM EMPEROR AURANGZEB

It will be recalled that after the first letter written from Machhiwara the Guru had sent another letter, entitled Zafar Nama, to emperor Aurangzeb from Dina. In that letter also, the Guru had expressed his inability to have any faith in the oaths taken by the emperor and in his sense of justice. That is why the Guru was not prepared to go to the Deccan to meet the emperor, as desired by the latter.

The emperor was then 91 years old. Zafar Nama had a deep effect on his mind as it not only revealed the truth but also the fearless character of the Guru's personality. Bhai Daya Singh, who had delivered that letter, had seen how, on reading it, the emperor perspired and got unnerved. He repented and felt remorseful at his past deeds, as was clear from the private letter that he wrote to his sons.* This was also the reason why the Governor of Sirhind, who had warned Dalla Singh twice by writing strongly-worded letters, refrained from implementing his warnings.

The emperor had shrewdly retained Bhai Daya Singh and got a letter of recommendation from him in the name of the Guru to the effect that the emperor was feeling sorry at what had happened and was anxious to have a meeting with the Guru at Ahmednagar. He had also written a letter to his minister in Delhi, instructing him to withdraw all orders issued against the Guru and prompt the latter to meet him in the Deccan by providing him security of passage and expenses required for the journey. Both these letters were sent through two special messengers who first delivered the letter meant for the minister in Delhi and then brought the other letter to Sabo Ki Talwandi for delivery to the Guru. It was on receipt of those letters that the Guru made up his mind to meet the emperor.

His decision to go to the Deccan was also guided by his desire to make the repentent emperor withdraw all such orders which intended to obliterate Hindu culture from the land by destroying their religious places, language and scriptures. One of those orders, issued on December 11, 1664 A.D., prohibited Hindus from riding in planquins,

* Reproduced on page 138.

from practising worship in temples, from celebrating Holi and Diwali festivals and from cremating their dead bodies on the banks of the Jamuna river. The Guru had no enemity with Islam but he could not tolerate the emperor's anti-Hindu policies. The same humanitarian spirit worked in Guru Gobind Singh as it did in the case of Guru Hargobind who insisted on emperor Jehangir to release the 52 Hindu princes incarcerated in Gwalior fort before he could accept his own release.

The degradation and helplessness of the Hindu society at that time is depicted by the following letter which Shiva Ji wrote to Raja Jai Singh II :

"If there is an aura of self-respect in your sword, if your galloping horse has any strength, then you should use them against the enemies of Hindu *dharma* and root out Islam from our sacred land.

"You do not know what atrocities this treacherous emperor (Aurangzeb) is inflicting on the Hindus. I know you have established relationship with him. But in doing so you have thrown the respect of your family in dust.

"It is not the time for us to fight among ourselves because the Hindus are passing through acritical period. Our womenfolk, children, country, wealth and pious deities and their worshippers are being destroyed by the emperor's monstrous deeds. His despotic rule has reached such a stage that if it is allowed to continue, no sign will be left of us on this earth.

"It is strange that a handful of Mohammadans should be able to rule over this vast land."*

It is clear that, so far as the question of uprooting the despotic Mughal rule was concerned, the views of Guru Gobind Singh and Shiva Ji were the same. But the Guru had no enemity with Islam as such. He did not harbour, any ill-will against Muslims because many good Muslims had supported his cause and sided with him in the fight against the Mughals.

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* Translated from Persian letter—see "Sikh Itehas Bare" by Prof. Ganda Singh, p. 197.

Guru Gobind Singh was a practical reformer. He picked up the sword when all methods of persuasion had failed. Now that emperor Aurangzeb had invited him with due humility and promised to do justice by punishing those who had resorted to barbarous acts, inspite of oaths on the Koran, the Guru felt justified in agreeing to a meeting with the emperor in the Deccan in view of the latter's old age.

TRAVELOGUE THIRTEENTH

DEPARTURE FROM SABO KI TALWANDI

The Guru left Sabo Ki Talwandi for the Deccan in October 1706 A.D. He had stayed there for nine months and some days.* During that period Dalla Singh had been baptised. The Guru asked him and some of his Brar Sikhs to accompany him towards the Deccan but they declined to go to such a distant part of the country. Some of the Brar Sikhs actually left Talwandi stealthily but Dalla Singh had not yet gone. The Guru apprised him privately of some important political reasons for which he had decided to go to the Deccan to meet the emperor. He also told him that it might be possible for him (Dalla Singh) to rule over the territory where he lived, but due to family and local attachments he did not give a satisfactory reply.

From Sabo Ki Talwandi, the Guru reached village Kewal in district Hissar and from there he entered Marwar after resting in Jhorji and Jhanda villages on the way. Then he moved to Sirsa where there is now a big gurdwara constructed in his memory.

During all this journey, Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh (the ancestors of Bhai Sahib of Bagrian) remained with the Guru. There, in Sirsa, the Guru had a cot with high pedestals prepared and, standing on it, he saw vast expanse of land all around him. He told Dalla Singh, who was still accompanying the Guru, that he wanted to make him the ruler of all that land, but Dalla Singh was not satisfied. The Guru kept silent.

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* Note : Dr. Gopal Singh, in his book 'Guru Gobind Singh' (p. 77), has estimated the Guru's stay in Talwandi for nearly three years, but according to the author that estimate is not correct.—Tr.

DALLA SINGH ULTIMATELY SLIPS AWAY

Two Sikhs, Ram Singh and Fateh Singh, had asked the Guru for permission to go home but the Guru had not agreed. During the night, when the Guru was asleep on that specially prepared cot, the two Sikhs slipped away. Dalla Singh also, finding it to be a suitable opportunity, placed the two golden bracelets and the double-edged sword, which he had received from the Guru by way of blessing, under cover of the Guru's bed sheet and slipped away unnoticed. In the morning, when Dalla Singh was found missing, the Guru enquired as to what catastrophe had befallen which had made Dalla Singh, who had earlier begged for a small space to stay close to the Guru, to run away. At that stage the Guru asked all other Sikhs to let him know who, out of them, were thinking of leaving for their homes. One Majhail Singh replied, "Sir, the Brars have gone; now we poor Majhails only are left." The Guru told them not to say so, as time would come when they will dominate over Malwa.

After that event, the Guru left for Nohar town, 30 miles to the south of Sirsa, and rested there. A big gurdwara exists in that town in memory of the Guru's visit.

AN ASTROLOGER ARRIVES

In Nohar town, an astrologer came to see the Guru. The talk centred round the question of good and bad omens. The astrologer, after making his calculations, told the Guru : "Sir, the purpose for which you are going to the Deccan will not be achieved. The emperor will die before you reach there. His son will seek your support in the matter of succession." The Guru smiled and appreciating his knowledge of astrology gave him some gold coins and blessed him. The astrologer found a new wave of joy running through his body. He said to the Guru : "Sir, you have enlightened me just with one benign look; how lucky those persons are who stay in your presence all the time." The Guru replied, "Without faith, no one can benifit. Those who lack faith are like the persons who, not knowing how to milch the cow, are content with collecting the animal's

urine. Very few people are desirous of seeking the boon of enlightenment and salvation."

After the astrologer had left, the Guru went out on horseback for seeing the town of Nohar. Finding the people dry, unsympathetic and busy in counting gold coins in their shops, the Guru prophesied :

ਨੂਹਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਮੋਹਰ, ਸਿੰਘ ਆਵਹਿਗੇ-ਸਭ ਲੂਟੇਂਗੇ ।*

(When the Singhs arrive in the town of Nohar, they will plunder it and loot the gold coins).

BHAI PARAM SINGH AND BHAI DHARAM SINGH BLESSED

These two brothers served the Guru devotedly all through that journey. They would move out to the next stop in advance, prepare a high-pedastalled cot with their hands and keep it ready for the Guru's rest. From Nohar, the Guru went to Bhadra. The intervening distance being long, every one felt tired. The Guru had sweets prepared and served to all. The horses were also given their fill. Pleased with the service of Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh, the Guru gave them two horses for riding and some arms for wearing on their body.

When the Guru reached the next stop of Suhewa, those those two brothers were already there, ready with the cot for the Guru's rest. Some of the Sikhs, who had accompanied them in the advance party, complained to the Guru that Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh had, instead of riding the horses, walked all the distance on foot, holding the reins in their hands. They had also not worn the arms on their bodies but carried them in bundles on their heads. When the Guru enquired from them as to the reason why they had done so, the two brothers, with tears of love in their eyes, replied :

"Sir, we are indebted to you for the gifts of horses and arms you had given to us. So as not to show any disrespect,

* This prophesy is reported to have been fulfilled when the Khalsa Dal invaded Chuhar Pur in 1754 A.D., but finding its water brackish and dysentric, left it and, instead, looted Nohar—cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 34).

we thought it better to keep them preserved. The Guru was impressed with their sweet reply and said, "If that is so, your tongue will serve the purpose of the sword. Whatever is uttered by you will have immediate effect." Pointing to a big *jand* tree in front, the Guru said : "When the *pipal* tree growing on that *jand* tree covers the latter fully, the Khalsa will subdue the Turks. As yet, being newly born, it is passing through its period of childhood."

PUNISHMENT FOR FAITHLESSNESS

When the Guru left Suhewa on his onward journey, Ram Singh, the descendent of Bhai Bhagtu, turned his direction homewards. Inspite of the Guru's sending a Sikh after him twice, he speeded up his horse, unmindful of the Guru's advice to accompany him in the interest of his own future. But he did not care. The Guru was sorry for his sense of faithlessness and said that the very home for which he was leaving would become the cause of his death. And the same thing happened. By the time he reached his house, he had become mad. His brother, Fateh Singh, took him inside the house but he started beating the inmates mercilessly. He himself smashed his head against the wall and died as a result thereof.

The same thing happened with Dalla Singh. He was stricken with disease which brought about his end. His enemies attacked and looted his property. His two grandsons also died, one from a serious wound and the other from smallpox.

IN MADHU SINGHANA

From Suhewa, the Guru along with the Sikhs came to Madhu Singhana after travelling a distance of nearly 12 miles. But by the time they reached it had become dark. The Guru wanted to see how Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh could stick to their duty of preparing the usual cot at that late hour. But faithful as those two brothers were, they thought of a plan to cut two portions of a tree which had two angular branches. By fixing them together with strings in the shape of a cot and, weaving it as usual, they were able to improvise the structure and keep

it ready by the time the Guru arrived. It was not long before the Guru came to know the type of springy cot he was sitting on. He was greatly pleased with the two brothers and showered his blessings on them, saying :

"You have fulfilled your duties and rendered service in the true spirit of Sikhism. You may go home now. Your words will be more powerful than sword. You will have no worry or fear from any quarter."

On the following morning, before leaving, they beseeched the Guru to protect them here as well as in the next world and never to forget them.*

AT PUSHKAR RAJ

This is an historic place of Hindu pilgrimage and is located at a distance of about 12 miles from Madhu Singhana. On reaching Pushkar Raj, the Guru explained to the Sikhs the importance of the place which was visited by Guru Nanak and where he had discussion with Siddhas. In the morning, they all bathed at the ghat sanctified by Guru Nanak and said their prayers. Pandit Chetan Dass met the Guru there and enquired who the persons with long hair, beard and arms, accompanying him, were. The Guru replied :

"They are my newly-created Khalsa who are distinct from the Hindus and the Turks. They are servants of God and yet in their infancy. Time is approaching when the Mughal rule shall come to an end and the Khalsa Raj will establish itself."

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 35). In his comments on this Ansu, Bhai Vir Singh has mentioned that when these brothers reached home, they were not welcomed by their elders who were alive and who thought that the two were deserters. So both of them went back to the Guru and narrated their predicament. The Guru gave them a 'pothi' (book of hymns) as a symbol of his pleasure, on seeing which the elders were satisfied. The Guru also conveyed his blessings to the elders. It is said that the 'pothi' is still available with Bagrian family.

IN DADU'S ASHRAM

Dadu was a well known saint of his times and Jaita Ji was the abbot incharge of his ashram when the Guru visited that place. He had heard from the sadhus and saints coming from the Punjab about Guru Gobind Singh and how he had sacrificed all his family for protecting the Hindu *dharma*. He had also come to know that the Guru was travelling through Malwa on his way towards the Deccan. He came, along with his disciples, to meet the Guru and after exchanging salutations and expressing sympathy at the atrocious events that had taken place, said :

"Guru Ji ! why was it necessary for you to give up the path of spiritualism and involve yourself in worldly and political affairs. If you had not opposed the rulers, things would not have come to that pass. Our Dadu Ji had tought :

ਦਾਦੂ ਦਾਹਵਾ ਦੂਰ ਕਰ ਬਿਨ ਦਾਹਵੇ ਦਿਨ ਕੱਟ ।
ਕੇਤੀ ਸੌਦਾ ਕਰ ਗਈ ਏਸ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਟ ।

(Dadu. banish your claims and live without involvements, for many have passed out of this world after making false transactions).

The Guru laughed and told Jaita Ji, "Dadu Ji was a saint. By giving such sermons, he had created a feeling of helplessness in his disciples. The result was that at first the Pathans and then the Mughal rulers came from abroad and enslaved our country. Uptil now they are destroying the Hindu culture and torturing the population. I have been sent by God to safeguard *dharma* and protect righteous persons For doing so it is necessary to fight with the tyrants. Some losses are, therefore, inevitable. If Dadu Ji had been alive today, I would have given the following reply to his sermon :

ਦਾਦੂ ਦਾਹਵਾ ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ ਲਈਏ ਲੁੱਟ ।
ਇਕੋ ਰਹੇਗਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਹੋਰ ਸਭ ਮਰਸੀ ਹੁੱਟ ।

(Dadu ! it is justified to lay claim to your right and rob those who are depriving you of it. Only the pure ones (the Khalsa) will remain, all others will perish in disgrace).

On hearing the Guru's reply, the abbot smiled and presented another couplet of Dadu :

ਦਾਦੂ ਸਮਾਂ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਕੈ ਕਲਿ ਕਾ ਕੀਜੈ ਭਾਇ ।
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮਾਰੈ ਢੀਮ ਇੱਟ ਲੀਜੈ ਸੀਸ ਚਢਾਇ ।

(Dadu ! watch the time and be thoughtful of the future. If any person hits you with a brick, you should receive the blow on your head).

But the Guru thought otherwise. He said to him, "You are a saint, believing in renunciation. But those who have to deal and punish the evil-doers would rather say :

ਦਾਦੂ ਸਮਾਂ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਕੈ ਕਲਿ ਕਾ ਲੀਜੈ ਭਾਇ ।
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮਾਰੈ ਈਟ ਢੀਮ ਪੱਥਰ ਹਨੈ ਰਿਸਾਇ ।*

(Dadu ! Watch the time and make an assessment of the future. If anyone hits you with a brick, you should strike him with a stone).

He further remarked :

"These are dreadful days of Kaliyuga. The despotic tyrants have their sway over the country. The saints and the cows are feeling miserable. The foolish rulers are destroying the country's culture and *dharma*. Instead of bowing before them, we should chastise them and make them bow. Such oppressors cannot be excused."

All those present heard these brave words of the Guru and felt inspired. The abbot invited the Guru and all others to have meals in his hermitage as it was Dadu Ji's desire to always feed the guests. The Guru said, "But you are Vaishnav (vegetarians); we have our hawks with us. You have to first feed and satisfy them."

The abbot could sense that the Guru was avoiding the invitation by advancing such a plea. He said, "Sir, these hawks must be very lucky to be associated with you. They must have performed good actions in their past lives. We will request them with folded hands to accept our hospitality and eat our vegetarian preparations made of *jawar* and *bajra*." On hearing these tactful words the Guru smiled and permitted the abbot and his colleagues to prepare

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 36).

the meals. When the Guru approached the hermitage, he touched Dadu's mausoleum with his arrow by way of showing respect. On this, the accompanying Sikhs questioned the Guru as to why he had done so when it was a part of his teachings not to worship graves or *samadhis*. They expected the Guru to pay penalty for doing what was prohibited.

The Guru was pleased and replied : "I did so in order to test your sense of awareness. Tell me now what you want me to pay by way of penalty. By a concensus among the Sikhs a penalty of Rupees one hundred and twenty five was decided upon which the Guru paid gladly. With that amount the Sikhs had a small kitchen tent prepared which they carried along with them during the journeys.

The Guru and the Sikhs all ate the food prepared out of *jawar* and *bajra* at Dadu's hermitage. It surprised everyone when at the sincere request of the abbot the hawks also had their fill with that food.

On the following morning, Mahant Jaita Ji, along with the other hermits, came out and joined the congregation. The Guru advised them about the duties of saints for the upliftment of the people's character. During the discussions, Mahant Jaita Ji mentioned to the Guru that in the Deccan, on the bank of the river Godavri, there was a *bairagi* hermit, named Bawa Madho Das. He was a proud man of *tantric* views who had made many followers by exhibiting miraculous powers. The Guru heard those words with a smile on his face but kept silent.

After two days' stay, the Guru moved on to Lalli Gram, Monghair and Kullait. The last place had attractive surroundings and the Guru stayed there for 12 days, perhaps in anticipation of the return of Bhai Daya Singh.

BHAI DAYA SINGH RETURNS

It was at Kullait that Bhai Daya Singh, on his return from Ahmednagar, met the Guru in February, 1707 A D. Both were over-joyed to meet each other after a lapse of nearly two years. Bhai Santokh Singh has written* that

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansus 37 and 38).

two mace-bearers came with Bhai Daya Singh as messengers of Aurangzeb and brought his letters already referred to. Bhai Daya Singh had brought the news that the emperor was lying seriously ill. Obviously, such letters could not have been written from death bed. It, therefore, stands to reason that no mace-bearers came with Bhai Daya Singh and that the letters in question had been sent by the emperor earlier after reading the Guru's Zafar Nama. Perhaps, Bhai Santokh Singh wrote it nearly 100 years after the event, merely on the basis of heresay.

WHY WAS BHAI DAYA SINGH DELAYED ?

It has already been mentioned that the meeting of Bhai Daya Singh with the emperor had been delayed for several months by the courtiers, due to the machinatious of the Governor of Sirhind, who did not want the cruelties perpetrated by him to be exposed before the emperor. It is also possible that the emperor, after reading the Guru's letter, might have asked Bhai Daya Singh to remain there till some satisfactory communication was received from his minister at Delhi about his proposed meeting with the Guru. On inquiry by the Guru, Bhai Daya Singh explained the emperor's reactions as follows :

"Maharaj ! When I met the emperor, he enquired about your welfare in respectful words. And, when he opened your letter and started reading it, the condition of his mind could be judged from his changing facial expressions. Sometimes he showed feeling of ecstasy, and sometimes his face expressed anger and then depression. It seemed the truth reflected in your letter compelled him to see himself in true light. After a few days, it became known that he had written to his ministers in Delhi to Issue orders to the governors to withdraw all orders against the Guru and keep him pleased by rendering whatever services were needed by him. He also had a keen desire to meet you during his life time. In anticipation of this meeting, he remains in depressed mood, and does not move about or hold audiences. The word has gone round that the emperor is not well."

The Guru heard all this with rapt attention and decided to resume his journey immediately.

DEATH OF AURANGZEB

After leaving Kullait, when the Guru entered Rajasthan, somebody, who came from the Deccan, conveyed the news that emperor Aurangzeb had died. The Guru enquired from him how the emperor's end came and what disease had afflicted him. According to historical evidence recorded by Bhai Santokh Singh* the emperor had lost all eppetite and power of digestion. Whatever he took acted as poison in his body. He remained in that condition for several days, terrified, as if it were, by angels of death.

It was the same Aurangzeb who had imprisoned his father for several years, who was responsible for the death of his brothers, who had put an end to the life of saints like Sarmad, whom the child Guru, Guru Harkishan, had refused to see and whose despotic orders had led to Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom.

Now Guru Gobind Singh had frankly and boldly apprised him of his sins and lack of genuine faith in God and also told him that if ever he (the emperor) met him, he (the Guru) would teach him how to follow the righteous path. It seemed the emperor wanted his sins to be forgiven by the Guru as he could not see any one else who could do so in his old age and declining state of health. But God willed otherwise. Although the Guru had decided to meet the emperor and was moving fast towards the Deccan, it was not in the emperor's luck to be forgiven for his evil deeds. He breathed his last at Amampura, near fort Bhiga, on his way from Ahmednagar to Aurangabad on February 20, 1707 A D. According to his own instructions, his dead body was buried in a *kucha* grave near the tomb of his mentor-guide, Khwaja Sayed Zahin-ud-Din, in Khudabad. It was later on, under Lord Curzon's advice, that the erstwhile Nizam of Hyderabad got a marble tomb erected over the grave. Born in 1616 A.D., Aurangzeb lived for 91 years and five months. His last will, which confirms the degenerated state of his physical and mental health, as described above, is given in Appendix I.

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 39),

SUDDEN BATTLE AT BAGHAUR

After learning about the emperor's death, the Guru decided to return to the north instead of going further down towards the Deccan. This refutes the suggestion that the Guru was going towards the Deccan only for missionary purposes. On the other hand his main object was to make the emperor realise the atrocities committed by his governors and punish them for the same, and also to persuade him to withdraw all anti-Hindu laws and instructions.

Nearby, was the historic city of Baghaur, where Krichak, the brother-in-law of Raja Birat, was killed by Bhim for trying to molest Draupadi. The Guru decided to see it before returning. Before the Guru and the accompanying Sikhs could enter the city, the local chieftain thought that some neighbouring ruler had come to attack him. But the Guru allayed his fears and instructed the Sikhs to buy their requirements on payment and not to antagonise the local inhabitants in any way. He decided to camp outside the town where several people came to pay homage and give presents to the Guru. The Raja of Baghaur, Shiv Pratap, also became friendly. He joined the Guru in his walks and learnt archery from him.

But three miles away from Baghaur lived a Rana, who, though related to the Raja of Baghaur, was not favourably inclined towards him. His men had captured the Guru's camels and also held some Sikhs in captivity. About 15 Sikhs chased the Rana's soldiers and had their camels and men released. In the skirmish that ensued the Rana's soldiers were defeated. Next morning the Sikhs mounted their gun and fired at the town's fort from a high place. The Rana's soldiers surrendered and came to the Guru for pardon. The Guru asked the Sikhs to withdraw the siege and allowed the people to move about freely.

When the Rana, who had gone out, returned he restarted fighting. In the skirmishes that followed, the Rana was killed and his soldiers accepted defeat.

Seeing the bravery of the Sikhs, the Raja of Baghaur requested the Guru to stay in his town for some more days, which the Guru did.

Thereafter, the Guru started on his journey back to Delhi. He adopted the same route of passing through Mewar with a set purpose. He had tried the hill chieftains in the battles of Bhangani, Anandpur and Chamkaur and found them wanting in the spirit of patriotism. He now desired to test the sense of patriotism of the Rajputs, for he believed that they still possessed the spark of freedom and self-respect. Now that Aurangzeb had left the political scene it might be possible, he thought, to restore national honour with the co-operation of Rajputs and other militant people.

TRAVELOGUE FORTEENTH

BACK TOWARDS DELHI

At the time of Aurangzeb's death, his eldest son, Bahadur Shah, was in Jamrud. His well-wishers communicated the news to him, but it reached him 13 days after the death.* He advanced post-haste towards the capital and by the time he reached Agra he learnt that his younger brother, Tara Azam, had, in his absence, already declared himself as the successor of emperor Aurangzeb. Bahadur Shah did not have enough army with him. He also lacked courage to fight with Tara Azam, lest the latter might treat him in the same manner as his father Aurangzeb had done with Shah Jahan and his other sons.

Bahadur Shah, in his dejection, consulted with his counsellors as to what could be done in the circumstances. Bhai Nand Lal, after leaving Anandpur, had joined the service of Bahadur Shah as his minister. He advised Bahadur Shah to seek help from Guru Gobind Singh who, he said, could be contacted near Baghaur in Rajputana at that time. Bahadur Shah did not feel satisfied with that suggestion. He enquired from Bhai Nand Lal as to the number of soldiers available with the Guru. Bhai Nand Lal replied that from a saint one need not expect help on the basis of numerical strength. One sympathetic word from his mouth was more than enough. Sri Ram Chander addressed Bhabikhan as Lankesh (ruler of Lanka) and he did occupy that position after the death of Ravana. Similarly, Guru Angad Dev advised Humayun to fight again and he was able to defeat the vast army of Sher Shah Suri.

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* In those days, the post used to be despatched through horse-riders stationed at distances of 40-50 miles where horses were changed, along with the post.

This argument appealed to Bahadur Shah. He sent Bhai Nand Lal, along with another courtier, Hakim Rai, to the Guru, with the request to forget the deeds of his father, Aurangzeb, and to benevolently extend his help for recapturing the imperial throne from Tara Azam who had usurped it in his absence.*

BAHADUR SHAH SEEKS GURU'S HELP

Both Bhai Nand Lal and Hakim Rai came and met the Guru near Baghaur. It was a strange sight to witness when Bhai Nand Lal saw the Guru living like a recluse. He recalled the glorious scenes of Anandpur and could not withhold his tears. With a heavy heart he disclosed to the Guru the object for which Bahadur Shah had sent him. After some thought the Guru replied, "If that is the situation, Bahadur Shah would have to accept one of our demands. He should agree to dispense justice without fear. No doubt, he has lost the throne which was his right. We will help him regain what is due to him."

Normally, no ordinary person would have been content with mere verbal assurance. The Guru did not have a large army with him at the time.** But Bhai Nand Lal was a man of faith. He knew the Gurn who had given that assurance.

History records that Tara Azam was also marching from the Deccan towards Agra with speed in order to occupy the throne there. He was challenged by Bahadur Shah at Jaju, near Dholpur and Chambal river. The Guru's reinforcement had not yet reached there and Bahadur Shah felt depressed. But soon the Sikh soldiers, under the command of Bhai Dharam Singh, arrived on the scene. Bahadur Shah had Bhai Dharam Singh seated on the elephant with him and the rest of the army was marching on foot and on horses. Tara Azam was also riding an elephant

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* cf. "Twarikh-i-Punjab" by Ghanaiya Lal (p. 55) in which there is a mention of one messenger going with Bhai Nand Lal.

**According to "Muntkhib-ul-Lubab" written by Khafi Khan, the Guru had only about 200 horsemen and some foot soldiers with him at that time.

and goading on his army to fight. The battle continued for the whole day.

Next day also a fierce battle raged. The Sikh soldiers gave a good account of themselves and Bahadur Shah felt encouraged. He thought that if, after victory, the Guru put forward a difficult demand, he would try to dodge him. Soon the tide turned and he started losing on the battle field. In dismay he again sent Bhai Nand Lal to the Guru during the night and begged for more help. The Guru told Bhai Nand Lal about the treacherous thought that had occurred in Bahadur Shah's mind, in the same manner in which Guru Nanak had exposed the Kazi while praying at the mosque in Sultanpur Lodhi. Bhai Nand Lal became aware of the reality but persuaded the Guru somehow to fulfil the assurance that had been once given. The Guru, in his benevolence, again blessed Bahadur Shah's efforts and advised him to continue the fight on the third day also. Bhai Nand Lal told everything to Bahadur Shah who felt surprised at the Guru's power of intuition in knowing what had passed in the former's mind. He sent a written letter of apology to the Guru, through Hakim Rai.

On the third day a very bloody battle took place. Tara Azam was surprised how a handful of opponents had killed thousands of his soldiers. Soon, two sharp arrows came piercing through his head and throwing him down from the elephant. With his death, his commanders and soldiers all lost courage and the battle came to an end with victory of Bahadur Shah. It surprised him not a little that the two arrows that had struck Tara Azam were shot by Guru Gobind Singh himself as they carried pieces of gold with them and Bahadur Shah knew about it. However, to keep up his face, he distributed prizes to his commanders on the battle field itself and declared himself as the rightful successor to Aurangzeb.

Tara Azam's army also accepted him as the new sovereign and pledged its loyalty to him.

THE GURU IN DELHI

After Tara Azam's death, the Guru came straight to Delhi. Bahadur Shah had, however, kept back Bhai Dharam

Singh and four other Sikhs. He gave them robes of honour at the time of their departure. He also sent, through them, a letter addressed to the Guru on the following lines :

"In helping me to win this war of succession, you have proved that you are always against injustice. I will ever remain obliged and grateful to you. I would have come myself personally to thank you but I am busy in settling down on the throne of Agra and making other administrative arrangements. It is my earnest request to you to come and meet me in Agra. I have also to request you to accompany me towards the Deccan."

On reaching Delhi, the Guru first went across the river Jamuna towards Shahdara. Many Sikhs from Delhi came to see him there. He expressed his desire to see the city of Delhi but the weak-minded Sikhs of Delhi accompanied him on a boat along the river to show him the city from outside. They were afraid that, by going inside the city, evil-minded Muslims might not be tempted to do some mischief. They arranged for his stay at a distant place in Moti Bagh (then known as Mochi Bagh). He knew the minds of Delhi Sikhs and expressed the view :

ਦਿਲੀ ਕੋ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਮੱਗ ਹੋਰਾ । ਜਥਾ ਮੁਲੰਮਾ ਕੰਚਨ ਕੋਰਾ ।*

(I have seen the way of Delhi Sikhs. They are like gilded copper plates).

On the following day, a large number of Sikhs came to pay their homage to the Guru. He went, along with them, at first to Ajmere Gate and Chandni Chowk and Rakab Ganj. He had necessary arrangements made for the maintainance of those places where Guru Tegh Bahadur was martyred and cremated. He also gave a lot of money for their upkeep.

The Guru had not yet replied to Bahadur Shah's invitation to go to Agra. Meanwhile, the emperor came to Delhi on some urgent State business. During that period, the Guru had gone to the jungle near Nizamuddin for hunting and was resting at the place now known as Damdama Sahib, behind Humayun's tomb. He had with

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 43).

him a hunting party riding on horses. There were also several Sikhs on foot.

By chance, Bahadur Shah had also come out for hunting in that area. One of his elephants, in intoxicated condition, ran towards the Sikhs. There was a stir in the Sikh camp but the Guru asked every one to remain calm and poised. He patted a he-buffaloe grazing nearby and, fixing his shield on its forehead, prompted it to challenge the elephant. It did so and attacked the elephant several times, forcing it to run away. When Bahadur Shah heard about this event his faith in the Guru's greatness was confirmed. He went back straight to the Red Fort, without meeting the Guru.

On another day, when the emperor was playing chess with his courtiers in the open lawn of the fort, the Guru shot from Moti Bagh an arrow which pierced a foot of the cot on which the emperor was sitting. The arrow had a gold piece attached to it which showed that it was of the same type which had struck Tara Azam's head. The emperor as well as the other courtiers thought that it was a miracle of Guru Gobind Singh to have shot the arrow so accurately from a distant place like Moti Bagh. Soon, another arrow of the same type came and pierced the other foot of the cot. It bore a message saying, "It is not a miracle; it is an art." This confirmed the belief of the emperor that the Guru was really a saintly person who was also a past-master in the art of archery.

Now, Bahadur Shah's desire to meet the Guru increased all the more. On his return to Agra, he asked his minister, Khan Khanan, to invite the Guru to Agra, which he did in the following words :

"The emperor is very eager to meet you, so kindly make it convenient to come to Agra as early as possible. The emperor could not have a free and frank discussion with you in Delhi in the presence of fanatic *maulvis*. That is why he had been refraining from meeting you there. As you are aware, new governmental arrangements have to be made which require his presence in Agra. He is, therefore, looking forward to your meeting with him at this place. He has also a desire to request you personally to accompany him towards the Deccan."

On receiving this letter, the Guru started preparations for going to Agra. He requested his two wives, Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi to stay on in Delhi. But both of them were not prepared again for separation, particularly when Sahibzada Ajit Singh was also not there to console them. A five year old boy of a goldsmith, whose features resembled those of Sahibzada Ajit Singh, attracted Mata Sundri Ji's attention. She requested the Guru to permit her to adopt that boy. The Guru forewarned her that that very boy, when grown up, would be the cause of her misery which it will not then be possible for anyone to remove. But Mata Sundri Ji insisted on adopting the boy. The Guru called the boy's father and had the needful done, though he himself was not in its favour. The boy was named Ajit Singh.*

With this arrangement, Mata Sundri Ji agreed to stay on in Delhi. Mata Sahib Devi was also requested to stay in Delhi to avoid hazards of long journeys and also for keeping company with Mata Sundri Ji, but the former beseeched the Guru, with folded hands, not to separate her from the Khalsa. She was prepared to undergo all hardships of long journeys and remain in the service of the Guru wherever he went. The Guru was obliged to agree and took her along with him to Agra.

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* In "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu), Bhai Santokh Singh has written that many writers are of the view that the boy, Ajit Singh, was not the son of a goldsmith but of a Khatri of Burhanpur where his descendents are still settled. They also mention that Mata Sundri Ji had accompanied the Guru upto Burhanpur from where she returned to Delhi, along with the boy.

TRAVELOGUE FIFTEENTH

TOWARDS MATHURA AND AGRA

It was in July 1707 A.D. that Guru Gobind Singh started on his journey from Delhi to Mathura and then to Agra to meet the emperor. In Mathura, he stayed near 'Suraj Kund' from where he visited all the important places connected with the life events of Shri Krishna. How happy he must have felt to see with his own eyes those places which he had described earlier with such intuitive depth and poetic excellence in his composition entitled "Krishnavtar"!

While resting under a tree, the Guru saw a monkey lifting the shield of a Sikh and climbing on a tree. The annoyed Sikh was about to shoot down the animal but the Guru told him not to do so. Instead, the Guru had some sweets brought and spread out for the monkeys to eat. They all ate the sweets but still were disinclined to surrender the shield. The Guru then placed some *laddoos* on his hands and invited that particular monkey to come and pick them up. It came and, placing the shield at the Guru's feet, started eating *laddoos* from his hands, to the astonishment of all the Sikhs. The Guru caressed the animal on its head and allowed it to eat all the sweets without fear. How lucky that monkey was who received so much love at the hands of the Guru !

IN AGRA

After staying in Mathura for a couple of days, the Guru moved towards Agra. On the way, at one place, he felt thirsty. A Sikh brought a bowl full of water from a ***brahmin's*** house nearby and offered it to the Guru, saying that it was clean and drink-worthy, since the house from where he had brought it, had no child who could have

possibly spoilt it. The Guru refused to take that water and, instead, drank water from a well further on. He expressed the following view in that connection :

ਸਾਧੂ ਏਕਾਕੀ ਭਲਾ, ਸੁੱਧ ਦੇਹ, ਮਨ ਸੁੱਧ ।
ਗ੍ਰੇਹੀ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਸੁੱਧ ਘਰ, ਸੁਚਿ ਤਨ ਮਨ ਅਰ ਬੁਧਿ ।*

(A sadhu is good when he is alone, for his body and mind remain pure. But for a householder, it is necessary to have more persons in the family for that alone will keep his body, mind and intellect pure).

On reaching Agra, the Guru camped in a garden outside the city.

When the emperor heard about the Guru's arrival, he deputed his minister, Muniam Khan and Amir Khan Khanan, to look after the Guru's comforts.** That Khan Khanan was not the brother of Akbar but was a nobleman and a respectable Muslim who was aware of the Guru's greatness. He was himself ill at that time and, therefore, sent some of his responsible persons to request the Guru to be good enough to honour him by a visit to his residence. The Guru did so and went there, along with some Sikhs.

Khan Khanan was everjoyed to see the Guru and received him respectfully. He complained of pain in his back which, he said, could not be cured inspite of long treatments. The Guru advised him to distribute food among the poor every day, placing one *dinar* (silver coin) unnoticed inside the food. He started doing so and his pain vanished. That custom is still reported to be prevalent there and the Amir is known as "Fakir Khan Khanan." After making suitable arrangements for the Guru's stay, as well as for the stay of the accompanying Sikhs, Khan Khana eulogised the Guru greatly before the emperor.

MEETING WITH EMPEROR BAHADUR SHAH

When the local Sikhs came to know that Guru Gobind Singh had come to Agra, they thronged to the place where he was staying in order to pay their homage and offer

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 46).

**"Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr. Ganda Singh, p. 44-45.

presents. The emperor also sent his courtiers with valuable presents to invite the Guru for the meeting. At the time appointed for the meeting the Guru dressed himself in new clothes and, accompanied by Bhai Sahib Singh, rode inside the fort where the meeting was to take place. All other Sikhs were asked by the Guru to stay outside the fort.

The emperor was waiting inside, along with his prominent courtiers. On seeing the Guru approaching he stood up and came forward to welcome him. The emperor was greatly impressed by the glow on the Guru's face and, out of respect, placed both his hands on the Guru's feet. The Guru was seated on a pedastal made of sandalwood, with precious covers spread over it. The emperor and the courtiers were also seated at the appointed places. Bahadur Shah still remembered the atrocities committed by his father, Aurangzeb, and the nobility and magnanimity shown by Guru Gobind Singh in restoring the imperial throne to him. He, therefore, respectfully addressed the Guru in the following words, translated from Punjabi version of the Persian text* :

"O, Leader of the knowers and worshippers of God. O, the Lord of the wise and illumined souls ! Is your bodily health, the fountain of all mercy, alright ? By your peace-giving sight, all my worries have vanished. I have also obtained this kingdom with your help and blessings. I will exert myself to the maximum extent to fulfil all your valid demands."

After saying these words of praise, the emperor beckoned his treasurer, who brought several valuable presents, including precious robes, a brilliant plume** and a golden

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* See "Umdat Twarikh" by Ahmed Shah Batalvi, quoted by Karam Singh, historian.

**cf. "Sawan Umri Guru Gobind Singh" (Urdu) by Lala Daulat Ram (pages 209-210). It is possible that the plume offered by the emperor might be the same which the Guru had placed on the head of Bhai Sant Singh in Chamkaur and which might have been sent by the Mughal army commanders to Aurangzeb and preserved in the latter's treasury. In any case, from thence onwards, the Guru started wearing the plume.

dhukh-dhukhi (a rectangular ornament for wearing on the breast)*, costing sixty thousand *dinars* in those days. The last was by way of award for the bravery shown by the Guru in killing Tara Azam. The emperor presented all these articles to the Guru with his own hands. He also wanted to earmark a big estate in the name of the Guru but the latter refused it. He only accepted the robes, the plume and, on the emperor's insistance, the *dhukh-dhukhi* also.

The emperor also requested the Guru to accompany him to the Deccan after the rains were over. Meanwhile, he invited the Guru to stay with him or wherever he liked and to meet him off and on. This new turn of events took place on August 2, 1707 A.D. It was the same Guru who some years back was being chased by Aurangzeb as a rebel. Now he was being welcomed and entertained by his son and the new emperor, Bahadur Shah, so lavishly. Strange are the dictates of destiny !

HISTORIANS' SILENCE

Except Lala Ghanaiya Lal and some Sikh historians, all other Muslim and British historians are silent about the part played by Guru Gobind Singh in defeating Tara Azam. They have recorded that Guru Gobind Singh had sent two to three hundred Sikh soldiers, under the command of Bhai Dharam Singh, in aid of Bahadur Shah's forces. But they have not mentioned that Tara Azam had died as a result of two arrows shot by the Guru, for the reason that the Guru had not personally joined in the battle. But such writers are not aware of the strategy adopted by military generals.

Sri Ram Chander had killed Bali by his arrow shot from behind the cover of a tree. That is why it was called *amogh ban* (the unerring arrow). Guru Gobind Singh had sent most of his Sikhs to the battle front. Only a few were left with him. The Guru himself was watching the progress of the battle from a high place at a distance. Right at the appropriate time he must have dashed forward on his horseback and, unnoticed, shot his arrows at Tara Azam from a viable distance, just as he had done in the battles of

* See "Mahan Kosh"—Tr.

Nirmoh Garh and Mukatsar earlier. The Guru had mastered the art of archery. He had made a mention of that art in his Epistle of Victory addressed to emperor Aurangzeb. Moreover, the Guru had promised Bhai Nand Lal that he would kill Tara Azam and have the imperial throne restored to Bahadur Shah.

ਤਾਰਾ ਆਜਮ ਕੋ ਹਮ ਮਾਰੈਂ ।
ਕੁਛ ਉਮਰਾਵ ਸਮੇਤ ਬਿਦਾਰੈਂ ।*

(I will kill Tara Azam along with several of his noblemen).

It was in fulfilment of that promise that the Guru had to resort to behind-the-scene tactic as he did not want to come in limelight in that war of succession. But emperor Bahadur Shah had acknowledged the Guru's part in killing Tara Azam while presenting the precious *dhukh-dhukhi* as an award to the Guru for his bravery. This is also further borne out by the Guru's own Hukam Nama addressed to the Sikhs of Dhaul (near Anandpur) in the following words :

"!0 Satguru Ji."

"The entire *sangat* of Dhaul is my Khalsa ! The Guru will protect you, remember the Guru always and your life will be redeemed. I came in all safety to meet the emperor and received the robe of honour and *dhukh-dhukhi*, costing sixty thousand *dinars*. By Guru's grace, all other works are being accomplished. I will also come after a few days. It is my commandment to all Khalsa that they should remain united and thus be happy. (Samvat 1764 Miti Katak 1—October 1707 A.D.)"

It was to avoid jealousy among his commanders that Bahadur Shah kept this award as a secret and gave it to the Guru only at the time of his meeting him in Agra.

SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT GURU GOBIND SINGH

Some Indian and foreign writers have mistakenly mentioned that the Guru had taken service under emperor Bahadur Shah and had, therefore, helped the latter in the

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 42).

war of succession. Among such foreign writers are Elphinstone, Forrester and Malcolm whom the Sikh historians, after due research, have given appropriate replies and proved that their line of thinking was wrong. In the present book efforts have been made to remove the misunderstanding on the strength of some old historic writings of Sikhs as well as non-Sikhs.

(1) Khafi Khan, as already stated, hus mentiond that "Gobind" while travelling with Bahadur Shah, along with two or three hundred horsemen, had developed 'rafakat' (friendship) with the emperor. If the Guru had taken service with the emperor, Khafi Khan would not have used the word 'rafakat'. Khafi Khan was very inimical towards the Sikhs. Had the Guru actually taken service, he would have highlighted it in his writings.

(2) Malcolm, though first agreeing with Forrester, has later on contradicted* him and said that it is not believable that Guru Gobind Singh who had suffered so much at the hands of the Mughals and who was known for his valour, uprightness and ever-readiness to punish the oppressors, could have even thought of taking service under a government against which he had been rebelling all along. Nor was it possible that the Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah, being aware of all the past happenings, could have confided in that rebellious Guru by taking him in his service.

(3) The writer of "Twarikh Bahadur Shahi"** has written as follows :

"At the time of Aurangzeb's death, I was in Delhi. The Mughal army was marching towards Burhanpur in the Deccan. Guru Gobind Singh, who was a descendent of Guru Nanak, was also travelling in those districts, alongside the imperial army. He was preachiug to householders as well as the renunciatives."***

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* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 46) and comments by Bhai Vir Singh.

**See English translation by Henry Elliot in his "History of India, as told by its own historians" (Vol. 7, p. 566).

***"Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr. Ganda Singh, p. 50.

This is the oldest writing written within a few days of Aurangzeb's death and there is no mention in it of the Guru having taken service with Bahadur Shah.

(4) Macauliffe, after reading many historic writings of the Sikhs and non-Sikhs, has written that Bahadur Shah asked for the Guru's help, which the latter sent under charge of Dharam Singh, after the emperor had accepted certain conditions. Further, the Guru met the emperor in Agra, where he was presented with many gifts. He was also invited to stay with the emperor in Agra, as long as he liked.

Obviously, such a treatment could not have been extended to an employee.

(5) In his book "Gur Sobha" written in 1741 A.D , i.e., only 33 years after Guru Gobind Singh had passed away, Kavi Sainapat has confirmed that the Guru had a meeting with emperor Bahadur Shah in which the latter presented to the Guru robes of honour and other precious gifts which the Guru accepted and asked his Sikhs to carry them to the place where he was staying. Such an honour could not have been extended to a person in royal service.

(6) Lala Daulat Ram Arya, while writing his biography of Guru Gobind Singh, has disagreed with Elphinstone that the Guru had accepted employment with Bahadur Shah. He is of the view that, after taking all circumstances into consideration, it has to be accepted that just as Rajas extend help to each other in times of difficulty, Guru Gobind Singh also helped Bahadur Shah to win back the throne, particularly when he was the rightful claimant. The emperor gave many presents to the Guru in acknowledgement and appreciation of the help given. He also wanted to grant an estate in his name but this was refused by the Guru.

(7) Lala Ghanaiya Lal has written in his "History of the Punjab" that, on receiving the news of Aurangzeb's death, Bahadur Shah sent his dewan, Bhai Nand Lal, to the Guru to request him for help in regaining the throne from his younger brother, Tara Azam. The Guru agreed and sent his Sikhs to fight on the side of Bahadur Shah. Tara Azam was killed with the arrows shot by the Guru. These arrows

always carried one *tola* each of gold to help the victim's relatives to perform his last rites. Bahadur Shah, after ascending the throne, brought the Guru to the capital and honoured him.

(8) Reference has already been made on page 213 to Ahmed Shah Batalvi's "Umdat Twarikh" in which Bahadur Shah's own Persian words (translated from Punjabi) have been quoted in which he had welcomed the Guru in Agra, thanked him for his help and honoured him by presenting valuable gifts. He had also promised therein that he would try his best to fulfil the Guru's wishes.

(9) Surinder Sharma has also written as follows :

"Guru Gobind Singh received a letter from Prince Muazzam (Bahadur Shah) asking for the Guru's help. With friendly relations existing between the two, the Guru had promised to extend the desired help."

"After victory, a big *darbar* was held in Agra fort. Bahadur Shah was declared as the emperor and successor to Aurangzeb. Many Rajas and Sardars offered their presents to the new emperor. Thereafter, Bahadur Shah offered his heartfelt thanks to the Guru for his help and presented gifts and robes of honour to him as well as to his valiant Sikhs."

(10) Besides all these evidences, we have the order* passed by Bahadur Shah on Nov. 7, 1708 A.D. (i.e. one month after the Guru's death) in which he permitted all the properties of Guru Gobind Singh to be returned to his heirs, instead of being confiscated as he did not want to retain any of the articles of a saint in royal treasury.

How could the emperor express such views if the Guru had been in his employment ?

From all these independent evidences, it is clear that the Guru did not accept any service under Bahadur Shah but only agreed to help him in the war of succession on the recommendation of his dear Sikh, Bhai Nand Lal, and with the intention of seeking justice from the emperor in the matter of atrocities committed by his Mughal officers. If

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* See "Later Mughals" by Irwin, Vol. 1, p. 90 and "Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr, Ganda Singh, p. 51.

the story presented by some Muslim writers to the effect that the Guru had helped the emperor because he was in his employment had been correct, those writers should have also mentioned as to why and when he left that service. Their silence on this point establishes the hollowness of their contention about Guru Gobind Singh taking service under tne emperor.

The fact that the Guru accompanied the emperor towards the Deccan was to press the latter to fulfil his promise to do justice. On his part, the emperor also wanted to obtain the Guru's help in his fight with the Marathas. He was obviously dodging the Guru because he knew that if he decided to call and hand over the Governor of Sirhind or Raja Bhim Chand to the Guru, the latter would return to the Punjab and his objective of seeking help against the Marathas would not be fulfilled. He was also afraid of the reaction of bigoted *maulvis* against such a decision, particularly when he was yet a new occupant of the royal throne. The Guru knew the emperor's mind and, therefore, felt disinclined to go any further with him which an employee could not have done.

ABOUT KEEPING KESHAS

During his stay in Agra, the Guru would often come out of his abode and rest under the shade of a tree in the garden of Amir Khan Khanan nearby. The Sikhs of Agra and adjoining areas used to come to pay their homage to the Guru and join in the congregations held there. One day, a Bhandari Khatri, Nau Nidh by name, came, presented his offering and received the Guru s blessings. He enquired from the Guru as to the reason why he had ordained that the Sikhs should wear long hair and dress in that particular manner in which they did. The Guru replied as follows :

"It is the primary duty of a Sikh to keep long hair. From our ancestors like Sanak, Sanandan and Sanat Kumar, till a few centuries back, all saints, *rishis* and *munis* had been keeping long hair which have been given by God to man as a symbol of beauty, decoration and manliness. Faithless people had them removed but I have restored

them. There is nothing new in it as the hair are born with man as a natural growth."

On hearing these words, Nau Nidh said, "But sir, those days were different when it was customary for all people to wear long hair. Now we are passing through different times." The Guru remarked :

"There is nothing wrong with the times. We have the same sun and the same moon, the same air and the same earth. It is the fault of those who are unable to keep long hair and instead blame the times. Among the Muslims, the practice of cutting long hair, beard and moustaches started from the days of Hazrat Ibrahim. So far as Hindus are concerned, it was Paras Ram, the arch brahmin who killed several kshatri rajas, and had their heads and faces shaved off."*

Those words silenced Nau Nidh who bowed before the Guru and left.

THE SAYYAD AND THE MIRACLE

In one of the congregations, the Guru, pleased with the devotion of Khan Khanan, said to him :

"The first Khan Khanan, who was the son of Akbar's maternal uncle, was a noble person. The present Khan Khanan has also gained equality with the first one in respect of nobility." This pleased Khan Khanan who bowed before the Guru in high esteem.

At that time, a Sayyad from Sirhind, who was also present in the congregation, put the following question to the Guru.

"Everywhere we hear praises about your greatness. Kindly tell us whether or not you possess any power of showing miracles."

On hearing this sarcastic remark, the Guru spoke as follows :

"The power of miracle lies with Bahadur Shah, who, with one word from his mouth, can turn a penniless person into a *panj hazari* sardar and vice versa. To kill or to forgive is the miracle of his tongue."

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 47).

The Sayyad was not satisfied with this answer. He again said, "But are you also having such a power or not ? Bahadur Shah has become an emperor. His orders will, no doubt, prevail. What we want to know is whether you also possess such a power and if so to show it to us."

At that time, the Guru took out from his pocket a few gold coins and said, "This is the second miracle. Whoever has got wealth in large quantity can achieve his objectives to that extent and people fight and kill each other to acquire it."

The Sayyad could not follow the Guru's hint and said, "But this is worldly wealth and those who have got it are respected by others. We are interested in seeing what miraculous powers are possessed by you."

On hearing these words, the Guru unsheathed his sword and spoke loudly :

"This is the third miracle which I possess and which can severe your head from your body right now, just like cutting a tree."

The Sayyad could not stand the glow on the Guru's face when he uttered these words. He felt non-plussed and ashamed and remained sitting with his face downcast.

The Guru further remarked :

"Tell me, Sayyad Ji, is this not a miracle which has silenced you and made you feel sorry for having put such a question ?"

There was complete silence in the congregation and everyone looked at the Sayyad with askant eyes.

KAZI'S MESSAGE DISHONOURED

One day, some Pathans brought a written message from the royal Kazi saying that Guru owed them some money which should be paid to them. According to Bhai Vir Singh*, some relatives of those Pathans were alleged to have been killed by the Guru in one of the battles and, according to the Muslim law of *Shariat*, the Guru was required to pay

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 48) and comments thereon.

compensation for the same. On reading the message, the Guru tore it into pieces and told the Pathans to go and tell the Kazi to first remove the flies that sit over the food that he eats and renders it impure, before communicating such orders. When the Pathans informed the Kazi about the Guru's reaction, he thought it to be an insult to *Shariat* and sent a complaint to Bahadur Shah. But the emperor scolded the Kazi for having taken such an impolite and unwarranted action and removed him from service. He frankly told the Kazi that he had gained emperorship only with the Guru's help and it was not proper for the Kazi to have written to the Guru in that tone.

RAJA JAI SINGH AND RAJA AJIT SINGH ARRIVE

Once, when the Guru was sitting among the Sikhs and talks in lighter vein were going on, Raja Jai Singh (II) of Jaipur and Raja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur arrived. Like other Rajas and Nawabs they had come to Agra to pay their homage to the new emperor, Bahadur Shah. They also brought many presents for the Guru and expressed their grateful thanks for the Guru's grandfather, Guru Hargobind, who had freed 52 Rajput ancestors of theirs from Gwalior Fort during the reign of the bigoted emperor, Jehangir.

Raja Jai Singh (II) had assumed rulership of his State in 1698 A.D. He was an able administrator and well-versed in Palmistry. He had written some books on that subject and was also known in foreign countries. He had great regards for the Guru whom he adored for his exquisite poetry, religious and spiritual attainments and farsighted statesmanship. The Guru too had respect in his mind for the Rajputs of Mewar who had fought with the Mughals on several occasions and defeated them.

After expressing their sympathy and condolences for the loss of Mata Gujri Ji and his four sons, after their separation from Anandpur, the Rajas praised the Guru's magnanimity in forgetting the atrocities committed by Aurangzeb and helping his son, Bahadur Shah, to regain the throne. The Guru replied :

"I have enemity with none. On the other hand, I want to adopt friendly attitude towards all. I look at others in

the same manner in which others look at me. Aurangzeb treated me as his enemy and I had to fight with his army. Now his son, Bahadur Shah, has shown regrets and humility and I have extended the help asked for by him. I have just fulfilled the promise made by me."

Raja Jai Singh was pleased to hear these words from the Guru. He, however, remarked with a bit of satire in his tone, "But how long will this meeting of the East with the West last ? Friendship with the emperors is seldom lasting." In reply the Guru informed Raja Jai Singh as follows :

"Bahadur Shah had promised verbally and in writing, through his dewan, Bhai Nand Lal, that he would remove the injustice done to him (the Guru). As you know Bhai Nand Lal was a dear devotee of mine and I could not refuse his request. It was for this reason that I helped Bahadur Shah to regain his throne. Now the emperor has to fulfil his promise and he has asked for one year's time to do so. I am waiting till that period. If the emperor continues to dodge thereafter, we will see what to do."

Raja Jai Singh promised to make available whatever assistance was needed from the Rajputs on any future occasions.

The Guru could judge the people from their looks and words. He had once accepted the services of the two Pathan brothers, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan, which they rendered with extreme devotion. But Dalla Singh who had bragged about his power and devotion failed when the Guru asked him to bring any of his men for testing a gun. Now, in Agra, those two Rajput rulers had also offered their help in all humility. In reply to the Guru's query as to how much land and manpower they possessed and could muster in case of need, they said that in the whole of Rajputana, about one and a quarter lakh of horses could be collected and duly furnished with supplies required for their maintenance. Besides, the Rajputs are famous for their valour and nearly two and a half lakh of them, including those living near the hills, could assemble in the battle field for mounting an invasion.*

* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 49).

The Guru, no doubt, felt pleased to hear these estimated figures but told the Rajas in a satirical mood that everything else about them was alright, but they desecrated their religion by handing over cows to butchers. The Rajas could not understand these remarks as they thought themselves to be protectors of cows and asked the Guru to clearly tell them what he intended to convey. The Guru then spoke as follow :

"You marry your daughters (who are as innocent and helpless as cows) with the Mughals. What could be a greater sin than this ?"*

This stricture was passed by the Guru with characteristic boldness on the strength of the following historical facts :

Raja Jai Singh(I) had his capital in Amber which is a few miles away from the present day Jaipur city. Prior to this, Raja Bihari Mal had married his daughter, Rajkumari, with emperor Akbar. Then his son, Bhagwan Das, had married his daughter with emperor Jehangir. After Bhagwan Das, his adopted son, Raja Man Singh, became the ruler in 1590 A.D. When Raja Jai Singh assumed the rulership in 1664 A.D., he helped the Mughals in defeating Shiva Ji, Maratha, and gaining the title of 'Mirza Raja'. It was during that very year that Guru Harkishan was brought to Delhi, at the instance of Aurangzeb, and accommodated in Raja Jai Singh's bungalow, now known as Gurdwara Bangla Sahib. Then some generations afterwards, Raja Jai Singh (II) shifted his capital back to Amber and it was from there that he came to Agra and met the Guru.**

This diplomatic way of instilling the honour of Rajputs in the minds of Raja Jai Singh (II) and Raja Ajit Singh had an immediate effect on them. They swore and said that if they claim to be sons of Rajputs, they would never do so again. It was very bold on the part of Guru

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* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 49).

**cf. Coronation Commemoration Volume of 1911 A.D., p. 600. In 1728 A.D. Raja Jai Singh (II) again brought his capital back to present day Jaipur city.

Gobind Singh to have given such an advice to the Rajput rulers while he was still a guest of the Mughal emperor.

The Guru was happy on having had such talks with the two Rajput rulers. He gave one sword and one shield to Raja Jai Singh (II) and one bow, with pouch full of arrows, to Raja Ajit Singh, as parting gifts.

VISIT FROM BAHADUR SHAH

The emperor, while out for a walk, one day came to the garden where the Guru was sitting along with his Sikhs. He desired to see the Guru and sent a message in advance. The Guru received the emperor with due regard and both talked with each other in friendly atmosphere, with the Sikhs and the emperor's aides standing around and watching the whole scene.

During the talks the emperor expressed the view that in Islam whoever reads the *Kalma* (Muslim incantation) does not go to hell. He enjoys happiness in heaven for ever. But the Guru held different opinion. He told the emperor that man reaps the fruit according to what he sows. If a person reads the *Kalma* but indulges in evil deeds, he cannot escape tortures of hell. The emperor wanted to know if there was any proof of what the Guru said.

At that stage, the Guru asked his treasurer to bring a counterfeit coin on which the *Kalma* and the year of Hijri were inscribed. The Guru showed that coin to the emperor and gave it to a person with instructions to go to the market to bring change in lieu of that coin. That person returned after some time and reported to the Guru that no one was prepared to accept that coin. On the other hand, he was reprimanded and the coin was thrown away. The Guru looked at the emperor smilingly and said, "Look, Shah Sahib ! There is Islamic rule in the country and the coin bears the *Kalma* and the Hijri Year, but still no one is prepared to accept it. In God's court, where truth prevails, no one will look at the *Kalma*. It is his deeds that will decide a person's future. The evil-minded persons will have to be interned in hell." The emperor accepted this as a proof of reality and took leave from the Guru.

DISCUSSION ABOUT RELIGIONS AND THREE GODS

During the Guru's stay in Agra, there was a fair at the historic centre of pilgrimage, called Pushkar Raj. The emperor sent Khan Khanan to enquire from the Guru if he would like to visit that centre in which case the emperor would also accompany him. The Guru replied back that he had already been there on his way to Agra and would not like to go again. Then the emperor invited the Guru to his palace and, after welcoming and seating him respectfully, had a long friendly talk with him, During the discussion, the emperor put the following question to the Guru :

"There are two known paths- one of the Hindus and the other of the Mussalmans. Which one appeals to you ?"

The Guru replied, "I am well-wisher of both the Hindus and the Mussalmans. I preach to them in the manner in which their welfare lies."

The emperor pursued his question, saying :

"God is one and the faith is also one. Towards whom is your heart inclined-the Hindus or the Mussalmans" ?

The Guru smiled and said, "Shah Sahib, there are three Gods."

The emperor could not believe what he had heard and questioned the Guru as follows :

"Guru Ji ! No sane person would talk like that or believe it. We have heard from all sources and it is also written in the Koran, the Vedas, the Puranas and the Bible that God is one."

The Guru smiled and explained the position to the emperor In the following words :

"God is no doubt one, but I have said three in order to make the foolish understand. You are a Mussalman and if any one comes and speaks about 'Ram' or 'Narayan' beforc you, you take it ill and push him away. You wish him to recite 'Allah' or 'Maula Pak'. Again you repeatedly tell others that heaven is only for 'momins' (i.e. the faithful Mussalmans). For Hindus hell is the place for they do not recite the *Kalma*. This shows that the God and the religion of the Hindus are not acceptable to you.

"Similarly, if Mussalmans take the name of 'Allah' or 'Maula Pak' before Hindus, the latter do not relish it. They consider those who read the *Kalma* as degraded. From this it is abvious that they do accept the God of the Mussalmans.

"But our God is one who is present in all (Ram) and who showers His mercy (Rahim) on all. We have the same respect for the real God of both sides and that is our third Path."*

On hearing these words, the emperor kept silent and left for his residence.

GURU'S MASTERY OF ARCHERY RETESTED

The Guru's presence in Agra as the guest of emperor Bahadur Shah had now become widely known. The Sikhs came from near and far off places to pay homage and make offerings to their Guru. It was a matter of surprise, bordering on miracle, to see that the son of the bigoted Aurangzeb should feel so much obliged to the Guru and seek his help and blessings. Not only did the treasury incur all expenditure on the Guru, who was staying as the royal guest but the emperor had also allowed the expenses needed for nearly two to three hundred Sikhs and their horses in the Guru's entourage to be borne by the government. The emperor himself availed of several opportunities to hold discussions with the Guru and keep him in good humour by either visiting him at his residence in Khan Khanan's garden or inviting him to his palace inside the fort.

One day a courtier of the emperor came to the Guru and, after paying his respects, said :

"Sir, I have heard your praises from many quarters to the effect that you are not only a brave general but also an erudite scholar, a poet and a past-master in the art of archery. I am told that your arrows never miss their targets. Could you kindly fulfil my keen desire to see you shooting an arrow at a pre-determined target ?"

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 1, Ansu 50).

The Guru sensed his earnstness and agreed to do so. He asked him to point out the place where he liked the arrow to be shot. The courtier spotted out a tree at a distance of nearly one and a half miles. The Guru stretched his bow with full strength and shot five arrows one after the other which all hit the stem of that tree. When the courtier went to see the result with his own eyes he was surprised to find all the arrows stuck on the stem of the tree like five fingers extended to shake hand with the visitor. He came back and bowed before the Guru in reverence and in appreciation of having actually observed what he had earlier heard about the Guru's marksmanship. He spoke about it to other courtiers and also reported it to the emperor. The emperor too became eager to see the Guru's excellence and ordered a hunting expedition to be organised on the following day in which the Guru was also invited to join.

HUNTING EXPEDITION

The Guru accepted the emperor's invitation to join the hunting expedition and got ready, along with some of his Sikhs, to take part in the hunt. Both the emperor and the Guru rode on their horses, followed by their entourages, hounds and hunters. They headed for the royal hunting preserve and soon several flying birds, hares, deers and wild pigs were killed. The Guru's arrows never failed to strike at the prey as soon as it was spotted out. The hunters and the hounds were busy scaring away the animals so that they might come out in the open.

Soon, a tiger jumped out of a thicket and one Buland Khan advanced to kill it. He had a sword and a shield with him. The tiger dashed at him and in a moment tore him to pieces. This terrified the rest of the party. The emperor announced a reward for killing the animal with sword or dagger and not with arrow or bullet. One soldier from a company, named Wazid Khan, came forward with his sword and shield to face the ferocious tiger but he too was killed.

At that stage the Guru asked one of his Sikhs, Roshan Singh, by name, to take up the challenge. With the Guru's blessings, he rushed forward and faced the tiger with a

sword in one hand and a shield in the other. He bore the tiger's attack on his shield but quickly inserted his dagger in the animal's underside which threw him away dead.

Both the emperor and the Guru saw that scene of bravery with their own eyes, to their great satisfaction. The emperor wanted to give the promised reward to Roshan Singh but the latter declined to accept it, saying that the Guru's blessings had already enriched him enough. The emperor appreciated the Sikh's attitude and the entire hunting party returned, along with the bagged animals and birds.

*THE GURU VISITS THE ROYAL 'TOSHA KHANA'**

The emperor was happy that such a ferocious tiger had been killed. He had its skin kept, along with similar other skins and gifts, in the royal 'tosha khana'. He once invited the Guru to see it and showed him around the whole place, pointing out briefly the history of the articles kept there. The Guru appreciated the whole range of collections and, when asked by the emperor to select anything he liked, the Guru picked up one of the books, entitled "Hanuman Natak", by Kavi Hirda Ram. It is possible that he might have read or heard about that book in Anandpur. It is said that the Guru kept it tucked up in his sword belt and had two copies thereof written out on reaching Nanded.

Readers might be interested to know that in that book Kavi Hirda Ram has described the life story of Sri Ram Chander in 'Bir-Rasi' metre which the Guru had himself adopted extensively in his own compositions. In Bachittar Natik the Guru had described Guru Nanak and himself as the descendants of Sri Ram Chander's sons, Lahu and Kushu, in the lineage of Bedis and Sodhis, respectively. That is what probably prompted him to possess that book.** The selection of a book relating to the life of one's ancestors, in preference to so many other precious things, is in itself a

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* Treasury-cum-Museum.

** "Hanuman Natak" has been studied by the author and some specimens of its poetry could have been given in this book. But, being in diffiult 'chanda-bandi', this has been avoided.—Tr.

proof of how much love Guru Gobind Singh had for the ancient Hindu culture of his country. Those who describe him as an opponent of Hindus are mistaken and misguided.

BAHADUR SHAH REMINDED OF HIS PROMISE

It will be recalled that when the Guru had agreed to help Bahadur Shah in the war of succession, the latter had promised to do justice and fulfil the Guru's wishes. Till then, the emperor had done nothing in this direction, nor had the Guru reminded him. The Guru now called Bhai Nand Lal, Hakim Rai and the maternal uncle of the emperor and told them about it. They went and apprised the emperor of what the Guru had said.

On the following day the emperor invited the Guru to his palace to understand fully what the Guru had in his mind. When the Guru came and was received with due honour, the emperor, after the customary greetings, sent away the courtiers and allowed only Bhai Nand Lal and a few others to stay on. He then eulogised the Guru's greatness and asked what the Guru wanted him to do. The Guru did not, at that stage, like to repeat all the atrocities which the late emperor Aurangzeb and his minions had committed. He only told him as follows :

"You wanted justice for yourself by regaining the throne and asked for my help which I willingly gave. I belong to 'Raghu Kul' of Sri Ram Chander whose teachings are :

ਰਘੁ ਕੁਲ ਰੀਤ ਇਹੀ ਚਲ ਆਈ । ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਜਾਇ ਪਰ ਬਚਨ ਨ ਜਾਈ ।

(It is the tradition of the Raghu family to fulfil one's promise even if one has to lay down one's life).

"My father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, fulfilled the promise given by him to Kashmiri Pandits by making the supreme sacrifice. I have also given the promised help that you had asked for. But you too had made a verbal and written promise which you should fulfil. Being a scholar of Arabic and Persian, the Guru quoted reference from the Koran and the Hadis which require a Mohammadan to carry out truthfully what he promises by word of mouth. It is a matter of faith and it behoves the faithful to fulfil his promise.

"You will recall that after the coronation ceremony you had called me in Agra fort and, after lot of praise, had said that you owed the emperorship to the help rendered by me and my good wishes for you. You had also promised that you would try your best to carry out whatever reasonable demands I placed before you. I do not need anything more from you than justice by punishing those responsible for atrocities againt my children and other members of my family."

The emperor heard all this with a sad heart and replied:

"Sir, I bow before you and will definitely carry out your wishes But it is yet only a few months when I assumed the rulership. If I have the Subedars arrested and handed over to you now (as my grandfather did by handing over Chandu to your grandfather), then the *maulvis* might accuse me under the law of *shariat* and incite the people to rise in rebellion against me. I would, therefore, request you to allow me a further time of one year to do the needful."

The emperor's reply had some justification in it. The Guru kept silent but after some time said, "Alright, we will see but, if nothing happens, I will have it done through one of my Sikhs. I only wanted to raise your prestige so that you could be remembered in history as a just ruler. But it does not seem to be in your destiny."

After some further talk of a general nature, the Guru returned to his residence.

TRAVELOGUE SIXTEENTH

FROM AGRA TO RAJASTHAN AND THE DECCAN

In November, 1707 A.D., Bahadur Shah decided to invade Mewar and subdue the Rajasthani rulers. He requested the Guru to accompany him on that expedition under the pretext of an outing.* He was confident that the way in which the Guru had helped him and the manner in which he had won his (the Guru's) heart by entertaining and offering presents to him, the Guru would not refuse his request. He also desired to have the Guru's company in order to dispel from the minds of Rajputs any doubts about his intentions and to facilitate their surrender.

The Guru told the emperor to proceed on the expedition according to his own plans and that he (the Guru) would follow slowly, blessing his Sikhs on the way. The emperor had agreed to fulfil his promise after one year. If the Guru had declined to go on that expedition, the emperor might have misunderstood it and secretly ordered for a surveillance to be kept on the Guru which could have prompted the Governor of Sirhind to resume his mischievious activites. That is why the Guru had not refused the emperor's request outright. At the same time the Guru had in mind the talk he had recently with the two Rajput rulers, Raja Jai Singh (II) of Jaipur and Raja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur, in which they had given indication of the extent of manpower and

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* *Note* : On the evidence of a Persian book "Hadayat Walde Kalin", it is recorded in "Banda Bahadur" (p. 33) that it was Amir Khan Khanan who had advised Bahadur Shah to conquer the Kachhwah Rajputs of Rajasthan and distribute their land among the Muslims to wean them away from helping Kam Bakhsh, another contender to the royal throne.

resources they could muster from Rajasthan in case of any confrontation with the Mughals. Discerning readers will appreciate that the reply given by the Guru was appropriate in the circumstances. In fact, he had already sent a Hukam Nama to the Sikhs of Dhaul (near Anandpur) in October 1707 A.D , saying that he would be returning to the Punjab shortly and that they should meet him, duly armed.

The emperor started from Agra on November 12, 1707 A.D. and reached Amber after a few days.* Finding that both Raja Jai Singh (II) of Jaipur and Raja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur had already surrendered to avoid bloodshed, he moved on to Merta Nagar, between Jodhpur and Bikaner, which was earlier ruled by Raja Rathor Singh (husband of Rani Mira Bai) and then to Chittor.

IN CHITTOR

While in Amber, the two Rajas must have met the Guru and discussed the situation with him. When the Guru reached Chittor, the Sikhs went to see the famous fort of that place. While returning from the fort they picked up a quarrel with some local Rajputs who refused to give them grass for their horses, even on payment, from out of the accumulated bundles. That led to loss of life on both sides. When the Guru came to know of the incident he reprimanded the Sikhs and warned them to avoid such situations in future.

The Guru wanted to move about in Rajasthan for some time but he was informed that the areas where he wanted to go involved difficult journeys over hills and through thick forests. The Guru, thereupon, changed his plans and decided to travel towards the Deccan along the route followed by Bahadur Shah. Passing through Rattan and other places, he came to the river Narmada. At a distance of three to four miles from there is situated the famous temple of 'Onkareshwar', which had been visited by Guru Nanak during one of his travels and where he had composed "Dakhni Onkar", after holding spiritual discussions with the local pandits.

* "Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr. Ganda Singh, p. 27-29.

DEATH OF BHAI MAN SINGH

The camps of Bahadur Shah and Guru Gobind Singh were pitched at a short distance from each other on the bank of the Namada. The Mughal soldiers had collected bundles of grass for their horses, which they were not agreeable to part with but which the Sikhs also wanted for feeding their hungry horses. This resulted in mutual fighting. The Guru sent Bhai Man Singh to stop the Sikhs from fighting but the Mughals fired on him and killed him. The Sikhs fought back furiously and killed many Mughal soldiers. The were able to bring the grass but when the Guru came to know of Bhai Man Singh's death, he felt greatly aggrieved by the loss of such a brave and devoted Sikh.

Bhai Man Singh was one of the three Sikhs who had escaped from Chamkaur along with the Guru and had got separated from him on the way. It was he who recognised the Guru when he was lying asleep beside a well in Machhiwara, with blisters on his feet. Again, it was he who had picked up the Guru on his shoulders and brought him to the house of Gulaba *massand*.

When Bahadur Shah heard about the scuffle and the death of Bhai Man Singh, he too reprimanded his soldiers for having refused grass to the Sikhs and for having made an uncalled for and wanton attack on Bhai Man Singh who had actually been sent by the Guru to stop the fighting. He personally brought all the guilty soldiers before the Guru, apologised for their behaviour, which resulted in the death of a prominent Sikh and asked the Guru to punish them in whatever way he liked by shooting or even by drowning them in the Narmada. The Guru, however, excused all of them, saying that by punishing them Bhai Man Singh would not come back to life.

This magnanimity must have impressed Bahadur Shah greatly. The Guru stayed there for one more night to arrange the cremation of his dear Sikh, Bhai Man Singh.

It may be mentioned here that in the emperor's entourage there were some persons who were not happy

about the growing friendship between him and Guru Gobind Singh. They were looking for opportunities to create bad blood between the two. This particular quarrel might have, therefore, been the handi-work of such inimical elements.

IN BURHANPUR

The Guru reached Burhanpur towards the end of June, 1708 A.D. and rested near the 'Khuni Bhandar' well.* The emperor had also preceded the Guru and was camping in Burhanpur.

According to "Suraj Prakash", the Guru was received by the Nawab and other gentry of Burhanpur with great respect. They brought him from the 'Khuni Bhandar' well to the city, with pomp and show. The Nawab knew about the good relations between the emperor and the Guru. So he was particularly interested in showing due respect to the Guru. The Sikh of Burhanpur were also very happy to receive the Guru in their midst. They had built a new residential house for his stay in their city, where they looked after his comforts and conveniences admirably well.

In Burhanpur, there were many followers of Suthra Shah and Udasi saints. They were also connected with the Guru's family and Sikh traditions. Apart from preaching among local congregations, the Guru was invited by devotees of adjoining areas as well, where he addressed large gatherings and administered baptism of the double-edged sword to several Sikhs. This is confirmed by Sainapati Maratha in his book** in the following words :

"At that time, the royal army was marching towards Burhanpur. The last among Guru Nanak's descendants i.e. Guru Gobind Singh, was also doing missionary work in that area. He often addressed large gatherings, accompanied by two or three hundred military men and commanders.

Elliot also writes as under in his book relating to Bahadur Shah :

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* According to local tradition the Guru killed six tigers on one day in the forest near this well.

** "Sri Guru Sobai" by Kavi Sainapat.

"Guru Gobind Singh was accustomed to preach among large gatherings. His speeches created lot of enthusiasm and religious fervour among the listeners. People of all views used to hear him."*

The Guru stayed in Burhanpur for 20 days preaching and blessing the congregations, wherever he went. He also visited Raj Ghat, where, on the bank of the river Tapti, there is a shrine built at a high level in memory of Guru Nanak's visit.**

THE LUCKY UDASI SAINT

In Burhanpur lived a very old Udasi saint, Jiwan Das by name, who had met Guru Hargobind as well as Guru Tegh Bahadur during the latter's visit to Assam, near the Brahamputra river. He had heard about Guru Gobind Singh's greatness and came to see him, supporting himself with a stick, due to advanced age. He was greatly impressed and paid homage to the Guru by lying down full length on the ground. As Sri Krishna had honoured Sudama,*** the Guru lifted Jiwan Das and took him in his embrace. On inquiry about his welfare he spoke to the Guru as follows :

"Guru Ji, when I saw your esteemed father in Assam on the bank of the Brahamputra, I felt as if I had seen God in the form of ancient sages, wearing long hair on their heads. On seeing Guru Teg Bahadur, while bathing in the river, it appeared to me that I was face to face with a *Raj Rishi* of olden days, with long hair on the head and a

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* cf "Banda Bahadur" by Lala Nanak Chand Naaz (p. 34) and "Calcutta Review", No. 87 of 1881 A.D.

**cf. "Panth Prakash" by Giani Gian Singh (chapter 38, p. 319).

***Sudama was a *brahmin* friend and a classmate of Sri Krishna. Being very poor, he was prompted by his wife to go to Dawarka and seek financial help from his friend there. In Bhagwat (Skandha 10/80-81) his name is also mentioned as 'Shri Dam'. Sri Krishna recognised him, embraced and honoured him and granted him all the boons that he needed in return for a handful of rice brought by him as an offer. (see "Mahan Kosh")—Tr.

flowing beard on the face. He was being served by the local Sikh congregation with the same respect and devotion as the soldiers served Raja Ram Singh with whom the Guru had gone to Assam.

"I was sitting with the Guru on the river bank when some Sikhs brought the news about your birth in Patna. I cannot describe fully the joy felt by all on that occasion. The sounds of drums and *shahnais* filled the air. Raja Ram Singh also expressed his happiness by ordering gunfire, for he knew that in Guru Ji's pleasure lay his happiness and victory. In that atmosphere of extreme jubiliation, I enquired from Guru Ji whether there was any special reason why he and Raja Ram Singh were celebrating the occasion of a child-birth (which is a common happening in the world) with such pomp and show. If so, I would like to see, that child."

Guru Ji smiled and replied as follows :

"This child who has taken birth in Patna has come to the world under God's special mandate. It was my inner desire which he has fulfilled in the 44th year of my life. His is a God-oriented and valiant soul. He has to achieve great deeds by protecting Hindu *dharma* and destroying the wicked rule of the Turks. He will start a new *Panth* and punish the evil-minded desperadoes and fanatics in order to help and save saintly persons. Then, leaving the Punjab, he will go towards the Deccan. If you want to see him, you may go and stay somewhere in the Deccan and remain engaged in meditation. You have a long life and he is sure to meet you there."

The Udasi saint then continued :

"As directed by your father, I had roamed about in this part of the country for several years and ultimately settled down here, waiting for you with faith in my mind and prayers on my lips. You have come here after 41 years and I am overjoyed to see my wish fulfilled."

The Sikhs, who were sitting around the Guru, heard this conversation with rapt attention and bowed before the Guru in deep reverence. At the humble request of the Udasi saint, the Guru agreed to have meals with him on

the following day. When the Guru, accompanied by his Sikhs, went to the saint's hermitage, he found sumptuous meals ready which all ate with relish. The Guru blessed the saint and renamcd him Atam Das on account of spiritual enlightenment that he had received. Atam Das subsequently went to Nanded also to meet the Guru and mention of that visit has been made later on in this book.*

BAHADUR SHAH INVITES THE GURU

The Guru had stayed in Burhanpor for nearly 20 days. Meanwhile, the emperor had advaneed several stages towards the Deccan. He sent a special message, through two messengers, inviting the Guru to come and meet him at the earliest. Although the local Sikhs wanted the Guru to stay on for some more time in Burhanpur, the Guru decided to resume his journey. It is possible that the emperor might not have wished the Guru's influence to spread in that part of the country as well.

Starting from Burhanpur, the Guru crossed the river Tapti and went to Jalnabad, Balapur, Akola, Amraoti, Bismat and Hingole. While the emperor had been accepting homage money from the rulers on the way, the Guru had been meeting and blessing the Sikhs who came to see him. Some of the Sikhs and their Maratha colleagues also took the Guru's baptism. At a place (perhaps it was Bhagaur from where the decoits had been cleared) the Guru stayed for eight days. From there, he crossed the Ban Ganga river, along with Bahadur Shah, and both headed towards Nanded.**

IN NANDED

It was in the beginning of September 1708 A.D. that the Guru reached Nanded. Arrangement was made, under

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* In Burhanpur, at the place, where the Guru had stayed, there is no 'Chaubara' (upper storey room) now but the ground floor room can be seen. But at a short distance from there, the local people with the help of prosperous Pothohari Sikhs, who have settled in Burhanpur, have built a very big gurdwara in memory of the Guru's visit.

**cf. "Sikh Itehas Bare", p. 51.

royal instructions, to accommodate the Guru and Mata Sahib Devi at suitable places on the bank of the river Godavari. The Sikhs spread out their camps at convenient distances from each other. The Guru told them that he had his own place in Nanded where he wanted to stay. On persistent inquiries from the Sikhs as to where that place was, the Guru smiled and shot an arrow and said, "Follow this arrow and, where it drops, think that to be my place. There I had meditated once in my earlier life in Satyuga." The Sikhs traced that place near the ruins of an old mosque in a field and informed the Guru accordingly.

On the following day, after completing the morning daily routine, the Guru, along with the Sikhs, went on horseback to see that place. He circled the place five times and sat there in meditation for a short while. Then he asked his Sikhs to clear that place as he wanted to put up his abode there. The Sikhs accomplished that work in no time and then occupied that plot of land.

There was a Muslim zamindar who claimed the ownership of that piece of land. Finding the Sikhs in occupancy of what he had thought to be his own land, he lodged a complaint with the emperor who was also then camping in Nanded. The emperor sent word to the Guru to occupy any other government land and vacate that particular place so that nobody might have any grouse or complaint. He replied that the place which he had already occupied was his own from the time of 'Satyuga' and that the ancestors of the Muslim complainant were living there only as caretakers. The emperor wanted some proof in justification of that claim. The Guru had the place dug up two and a half yards deep and recovered certain articles, which he had named, from a cave underneath. All, including the emperor, were wonder-struck to see those articles and bowed before the Guru in reverence. This naturally disappointed the zamindar but the Guru compensated him abundantly for the services which he and his ancestors had rendered in looking after that place. The Guru had a regular sale deed executed in his favour in order to complete the revenue records. Bahadur Shah also granted some more land to the zamindar to please him.

Apart from making payment for the land, the Guru felt greatly pleased with the zamindar. He blessed him saying that he would be respected by the local Sikhs of Nanded. Actually, for two and a half centuries during the control of the priests and the Nizam of Hyderabad, the descendants of the zamindar continued to receive financial help from Takhat Sri Hazur Sahib on the occasions of marriages, deaths and other functions in their families and on pious days like Id, Bakrid etc. But now from the time, when the management was taken over by the Board, that help has been considerably reduced. At the time of the author's visit to Nanded in 1971 A.D., two descendants of the zamindar, named Mohammed Abdul Samad Khan and Mohammed Lutfullah Khan, were living there in their old age. The latter, who was described in records as "Mamuldar Gurdwara Sachh Khand Sri Abchal Nagar and Muddaras Wazifa-Yab, Mohalla Zer Kila Kadim, Azad Road, Nanded City", told the author that now only on four occasions i.e. Id, Bakrid and two other celebrations ample and free provisions are received by them from the Gurdwara, apart from ten annas in cash every month. He also told him that even these grants are held by them in great esteem as these were the result of the Guru's blessings.

With these facts before us, there can be no question of any presumption that the land in question was usurped by the Guru. The feeling, which can possibly arise in doubting minds, is as to how the Guru could tell what his antecedants were in Satyuga and how he could indicate the signs which proved the authenticity of his claim to the disputed land. In his autobiography* the Guru, while referring to his past life of meditation on Hemkunt** with seven snow-clad hills

*"Bachittar Natak"—Chapter 14 (cf. "Shabdarath Dasam Granth Sahib", published by Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 91).

**This place has now been identified at a height of nearly 16000 ft. in Chamoli district of Uttar Pradesh and has become a centre of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. There is a mention of Hemkunt in Mahabharat also. (see "Mahan Kosh"—Tr.)

surrounding it, has made a mention of happenings in Satyuga in the following words :

"ਜਿਹ ਜਿਹ ਮੈ ਲਖੇ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ । ਚਹਤ ਤਿਨਕੋ ਕੀਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਾ ।
ਜੋ ਜੋ ਜਨਮ ਪੂਰਬਲੇ ਹੋਰੇ । ਕਹਿ ਹੋ ਸੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਪਰਾਕ੍ਰਮ ਤੋਰੇ ।੪।
ਜਿਹ ਜਿਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਜਨਮਨ ਸੁਧਿ ਆਈ । ਤਿਮ ਤਿਮ ਕਹੋ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਬਨਾਈ ।
ਪ੍ਰਥਮੇ ਸਤਿਜੁਗ ਜਿਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਲਹਾ । ਪ੍ਰਥਮੇ ਦੇਖਿ ਚਰਿੱਤ੍ਰ ਕੋ ਕਹਾ" ।੧੦।

(As I have witnessed the scenes, so have I depicted them. Whatever events have taken place in my past lives, I will describe them with thy power, O Lord.

(Whatever, after my birth, I have realised by intuition, I have included in this Granth. In the first place, whatever was revealed about Satyuga, I have mentioned it under the miracle of Sri Bhagauti Ji (the primordial God).

With such recorded statements it goes without saying that the Guru had the intuitive power to know about the past. We, even now, come across instances where children give indications, however scanty those may be, about their parents and other events of their past lives. "Bachittar Natak" was composed by the Guru in Anandpur. Now, when the time had come, he had indicated the signs and proof of his having meditated at the disputed place in Nanded. Needless to add that from times immemorial the river Godavari was considered to be a sacred river and many renowned sages of old had lived near its banks and concentrated on God's Name in peaceful environments. That is why there are many famous places at short distances there, like Mata Anjani's temple, Sidh Nath Puri, Braham Puri, Narsingh Puri and Gautam Rishi's cave where big fairs are held every year. No wonder if in Satyuga Guru Gobind Singh had also, in his past life during that age, selected that place for concentrated meditation.

It is recorded that during the Guru's stay in Nanded, an old saint, called Nau Nand, after whom the city was named, felt attracted towards the Guru and offered him an old Sanskrit work of his mentor, Brahman Nand, entitled "Sukhra Bhas Ar Saraswati" and received his blessings.

MEETING WITH BANDA BAHADUR

A *bairagi* sadhu, Madho Das by name, had settled in Nanded for the last several years. He was a Rajput by caste and was born in 1670 A.D. in Poonch (Kashmir) in the house of Ram Dev. Some writers like Hakam Rai* and Munshi Budh Singh** have, in their books, mentioned that Banda (whose original name was Lachman Das) was a Sodhi and had migrated from Pathankot to Rajouri in Kashmir.

It was customary in those days that every hunter used to be equipped with sword and arrows. Around Poonch there were thick forests where wild animals like tigers, leopards, bears and jackals used to roam about freely. The said Lachman Das, one day, went out for hunting and killed a doe which was pregnant. When he went to collect the dead prey, he was filled with remorse. In a repentent mood he set aside his arms and decided not to hunt in future. His parents noticed the change on his face and in his general behaviour which indicated that he was after renunciation.

At that time, a batch of sadhus came to their village. Their leader was a *bairagi*, named Janaki Das. Lachman Das felt attracted towards him. He became his disciple and was renamed Madho Das. He was a young boy of 16 years at that time and had beautiful complexion and impressive features. When Madho Das parted from his parents to go away in the company of his mentor, they felt dismayed due to pangs of separation. But their son had made up his mind to leave the household and become a recluse.

After some time, Madho Das left the company of Janaki Das *bairagi* and moved about on his own. That was the time when Guru Gobind Singh was staying in Paonta and, after the battle of Bhangani, had came back to Anandpur and from there moved to Bhabor. Madho Das, who was of saintly and heroic disposition, must have heard about the Guru and come to know about his greatness. He first came to Lahore and stayed in the temple of Bawa Ram

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* "Ahwal Lachman Das Urf Banda" (Urdu).
**"Rasala Nanak Shah".

Thaman*. The Mughal rulers of the day were bent upon converting Hindus to Islam on a large scale. Madho Das, who was in search of mental peace, left Lahore and went to Nasik in Maharashtra to settle there.

Nasik, situated on the bank of the river Godavari, is known for its sanctity from the days when Sri Ram Chander came during his long exile and stayed in Panchvati Ashram near the river bank. Madho Das remained in Nasik for a long time, during which he came in contact with the *tantric* yogi, Aughar Nath, who trained him in yogic practices and in performing miracles. He was advised to shift to a lonely place where he could practice *tantric* yoga with success. It was according to these instructions that Madho Das had come to Nanded whose situation on the bank of the river Godavari had appealed to his mind. There, during the course of several years stay, he had perfected his *tantric* art and acquired mastery over satanic spirits. But, in the absence of any genuine spiritual guide, he was wasting his *tantric* energy and was only adding to the number of followers.

It was in September, 1708 A.D. that Guru Gobind Singh had reached Nanded. He camped at a short distance from the city. Soon, the local Sikhs and those living in adjoining areas started coming and joining in congregations, both in the mornings and in the evenings. The Guru had, in all, two to two and a half hundred armed Sikhs with him. But during the day, when he rode out for hunting, only ten to fifteen armed Sikhs used to accompany him as his body-guard One day, while riding along the river, he approached a neat, shady place, where the river water was flowing smoothly and peacefully below and near which Madho Das had set up his hermitage. The other *bairagi* sadhus used to sleep on the ground, but inside they kept a picture of their mentor, Madho Das, on a cot, with clean bed sheets laid thereon. They also kept some articles of worship, e.g. flowers, incense, sandlewood etc. near the picture. The Guru approached the place, alighted from his horse and went

* "Banda Singh Bahadur" by Lala Nanak Chand 'Naaz', p. 15.

straight into the lodge. Keeping aside the articles of worship, he sat on the bed, as if knew the owner of the place as a friend, separated for a long time, whose privacy he could disturb without hesitation. Madho Das had gone out. In his absence, the Guru asked his Sikhs to prepare goat meat which all ate with relish.

The disciples of Madho Das were helpless before the Guru who they thought had defiled the *bairagi's* hermitage. They only frowned at the Sikhs and gnawed their teeth in despair. They searched out Madho Das and told him as to what had happened. Before returning to his abode Madho Das exercised all his invisible *tantric* powers by sending controlled spirits to topple the Guru from his bed but they failed to achieve their object. Finding some slight shakiness in the feet of the bed, the Guru fixed arrows on them to keep them in position. When Madho Das realised that some great soul had come to his *ashram*, he came running and, facing the Guru, said,"You believe in violence, why have you killed my goat ?" The Guru replied smilingly, "I came here thinking that it was the abode of a mahatma. It was the duty of your disciples to welcome the guests and entertain them but they did not do so. So we have done the job ourselves." Madho Das was surprised at the reply and asked "Who are you who has shown disrespect towards the *ashram* of my guru ?" Guru Gobind Singh enquired as to who his guru was and in what condition he was at that time.

The Guru's query surprised Madho Das all the more. He said, "My guru has passed away but the *ashram* is known after his name. I do not know where my guru is and in what condition he is at present. If you know anything about him, then let me know."

The Guru pointed out towards a ripe *bill* (marmelos) fruit on a tree in the compound of the hermitage and told Madho Das, "Your guru is residing inside that fruit as an ansect. If you like to see it you may do so. That insect is alive and is sucking the juice of the fruit. If you call it you will get a response."

When Madho Das got the fruit plucked and broken, he saw a thick and long insect which made a squeamish

sound and fell down, dead. The Guru told Madho Das that his guru had been saved the cycle of births and deaths, just as Guru Nanak had redeemed Duni Chand's father from the life of a lion. Madho Das now realised that he had met his match who had by his superior spiritual powers* subdued all his *tantric* propensities which had made him leader of so many followers. Normally, sadhus are very obstinate persons. They cannot tolerate insult of their gurus. But here was Madho Das, who, after seeing and testing the Guru's greatness. came to the conclusion that only selfless surrender before him could save the situation.

On the other side, the Guru had also come to redeem Madho Das from the life of a *tantric* and raise him spiritually. During their brief conversation, Madho Das realised who the Guru was and agreed to become his Sikh. The Guru had, no doubt, with him more than two hundred tried and undaunted Sikhs who were heroes of many a battle. He could have got his wishes carried out through any one of them. He had also come across many sadhus in his life, but, except Mahant Kirpal Das, all other had slipped away in times of difficulty. In Madho Das the Guru had seen a seeker of truth from his past lives but unluckily he too had got stuck up in *tantric* practices and missed the real goal of life. Having gained control over some spirits he was wasting his accumulated yogic energy in display of miracles. The Guru wanted to enlighten him spiritually and direct his misguided energy in the performance of such

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* Instances are not lacking in which those whose consclousness is tuned to super-consciousness can know about the past, the present and the future. Gurbani alludes to this state by saying" ਨਾਮ ਰਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਇ" (Guru Nanak in "Sidh Gosht) and "ਜੋ ਇਹ ਮਨ ਉਨਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਰਹੈ ॥ ਤਉ ਤੀਨ ਲੋਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਤੈ ਕਹੈ ॥" (Gauri Kabir). We have similar examples in the life of Guru Gobind Singh and other enlightened souls of the world. Kabir could recognise a *bania* in the life of a bullock eating grass and reminded him of neglecting rememberance of God's name as a human being.—Tr.

deeds which might benefit the society and the country and also immortalise his name in national history.

Having told the Guru that he (Madho Das) was his *banda* (slave), the Guru spoke to him as follows.

"At present Hinduism stands eclipsed by the despotic Mughal rule. The sadhus, the saints and the cows are not safe. Centres of pilgrimage are being desecrated, holy scriptures have been burnt and lakhs of Hindus have been converted to Islam. In order to stop such atrocities, my father (Guru Teg Bahadur) had sacrificed his life. The city of Anandpur was despoiled by the Mughals. My four sons and mother (Mata Gujri Ji) and thousands of my Sikhs have also laid down their lives. Having suffered all these losses and resigned myself fully before the Divine Will, I have come to this side of the country. Future depend upon God's wishes."

He continued :

"You have called yourself *banda*. If this is a promise and has been made by you sincerely then, as a Rajput, you have to perform the duties of a Kshatri, just as Sri Ram Chander selected Hanuman and made him his dear devotee. I too want to make you my Sikh and entrust you with the requisite powers to fight out the battle for justice. You know that, in Gita, Sri Krishna had told Arjun that fighting for a just cause would prove benificial to him inasmuch as that if he died on the battle field he would go to heaven but if he became victorious he would rule in the world. These words had emboldened Arjan and enlightened his mind which enabled him to perform his duty as a Kshatri in the battle. So do I want you to act as a true Rajput and pursue the fight against injustice where I have left it in the Punjab."

When the Guru spoke these words there was a wonderous glory on his face. He cast a benign look at Madho Das and, deputing him as the Jathedar (leader) of the Sikhs, he blessed him as follows :

ਪੰਥ ਭੇਜ ਤੇਰੇ ਹੀ ਚੀਨਾ । ਸਭਨਿ ਬਿਖੈ ਤੋ ਕੋ ਮੁਖ ਕੀਨਾ ।
ਆਪਨਿ ਆਪ ਤੋ ਭਾਖਿਯੋ ਬੰਦਾ । ਇਹੈ ਬਿਦਤ ਜਗ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਲੰਦਾ ।

ਨਹਿ ਠਹਰਿਹਿ ਰਿਪੁ ਤੋਹਿ ਅਗਾਰੀ । ਹੋਇ ਸੰਘਰ ਘਮਸਾਨ ਉਦਾਰੀ ।
ਲਰੈ, ਅਰਹਿ ਲਾਖੋਂ ਹੀ ਮਰੈ । ਬਚੈ ਸੁ ਜੀਵ, ਭਾਜ ਜੋ ਪਰੈ ।*

(I have entrusted the glory of the Panth in your hands; you have been made the leader of the Khalsa. You have called yourself *banda*. This will raise your name high in the world. The rulers will not be able to withstand your onslaughts. In the stormy battles lakhs of persons will die fighting. Only those will be saved who run away from the battle field.)

Madho Das felt inspired on hearing these words. He was already keeping long hair on his head and was a known hunter. The Guru administered to him the baptism of the double-edged sword with his own hands and renamed him Banda Singh. Full of love, the Guru was also ready to transfer his sword-belt, along with the sword, to Banda Singh. But Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and other leading Sikhs objected to it and said, with folded hands, "Guru Ji, with this sword you baptised us among the five Beloved Ones. We have also served you devotedly with our bodies, minds and souls and remained with you through thick and thin. This *bairagi*, Madho Das, is a fresh convert. Your sword represnets not only temporal power but spiritual power also. Therefore, the five Beloved Ones have a prior claim to that sword. If you want to give anything to Banda Singh, then give him arrows and keep the sword for the Khalsa."

The Guru told them, "Don't be impatient. All Khalsa brothers are my sons. This Banda Singh will perform great deeds. He will pick up the enemies of the Khalsa and destroy them. After him it will be the Khalsa who will rule and live happily". Saying this, the Guru gave five arrows to Banda Singh and told him, "In carrying out the duty assigned to you, you will face many difficulties. But do not feel discouraged. Whenever there is an emergency, think of God and shoot out one arrow." A batch of 25 valiant and devoted Sikhs was deputed to accompany him. Prominent among them were Babas Binod Singh, Kahan Singh, Baj Singh, Bijai Singh and Ram Singh who

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 5),

could also satisfy the Sikhs in the Punjab about the leadership of Banda Singh and also help him in his task. After making preparations for some days and receiving the Guru's blessings, the batch under the leadership of Banda Singh left for the Punjab. His achievements there form a golden page in the history of the country.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

It was more than a year when the Guru and Bahadur Shah had left Agra for the Deccan. If the emperor was not fulfilling his promise even within the extended period, why did not the Guru disassociate himself from the emperor and go to the Punjab himself instead of sending Banda Bahadur from Nanded ? This is the important question that has been raised by Ghulam Hussain in "Sair-Ul-Mutarkhin" and in some other books by Muslim and British writers. In their opinion the Guru had become disappointed and did not like to go back to the Punjab again.

Actually, by now Bahadur Shah was firmly in the saddle. He had established his control over the nobles, the army and the provincial rulers. If the Guru had displeased the emperor by disassociating himself from him at that time, the latter might have revived the orders once issued by Aurangzeb but withdrawn later on after receiving the Guru's Zafar Nama. The Nawabs in the Punjab, who had stopped their enemity with the Sikhs on account of the friendship developed by the emperor with the Guru, would have also changed their attitude. Even the emperor himself would have sensed the danger of revolt in the Punjab if the Guru had left the company of Bahadur Shah abruptly and returned to the north. It was on account of all these considerations that the Guru had decided to send Banda Singh first for arousing the Sikhs and preparing the ground for fighting with the Mughals. The Guru would have followed later on and after obtaining reinforcements from the Rajputs and other Hindu rulers on the way, as promised by them, would have, by their combined effort, destroyed the Mughal rule from the Punjab and made Banda Bahadur as the new ruler, just ns Sri Ram Chander, after defeating

Ravana, had made Babhikhan the ruler of Sri Lanka. That the Guru had planned his stategy along these lines is supported by the evidence provided by the Guru's Hukam Nama sent from Agra to the Sikhs of Dhaul in which he had indicated that he would be coming to the Punjab after a few days and meet the Khalsa brothers in Kahlur (near Anandpur). Evidently, the Guru's displeasing the emperor and returning to the Punjab from the way was fraught with danger. He had only about 300 armed Sikh soldiers with him at that time. If the emperor had decided to order his army commanders to check those Sikhs and the Guru on their way back to the Punjab, the result would have been disasterous.

While departing from Nanded, the Guru had given some instructions to Banda Singh. These have been recorded by Bhai Santokh Singh in the following words* :

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮੁਖ ਕਹਿਯੋ ਜਤੀ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਵਤ । ਰਹੈ ਤੇਜ ਤੇਰੋ ਵਧ ਤਾਵਤਿ ।
ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਰਜ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਨਹਿ ਮੁਰੈ । ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਰਜ ਤੇ ਰਿਪੁ ਨਹਿ ਅਰੈ ।
ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਰਜ ਤੇ ਤੇਜ ਸਵਾਯਾ । ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਰਜ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਪਾਇਆ ।
ਬੰਦਾ ਭਯੋ ਜਿ ਬੰਦੀ ਬਿਆਹੈ । ਤਬਿ ਇਨ ਸਰਨਿ** ਤੇਜ ਘਟ ਜਾਹੈ ।
ਜਮਨਾ ਪਾਰ ਜਾਇ ਸਭ ਠੌਰਾ । ਹਨਹੁ ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਘਾਲਹੁ ਬਡੋ ਰੌਰਾ ।

(So long as you remain a celibate, your power and glory will be on the ascendancy. Do not, therefore, swerve from the path of celibacy. If you accept this advice, no ruler will dare challenge you Your glory will increase and you will achieve your objectives. But if you marry, the power of these arrows, which I have given to you, will diminish. Go across the Jamuna and bring the tyrants to their knees by spreading havoc in their midst).

STRESS ON CELIBACY

Accepting the advice given by Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Singh, along with the Sikhs who accompanied him from Nanded and those who joined from Rajasthan, travelled fast towards the Punjab and. after making short stops on the way, reached Khar Khodhe in Sonepat tehsil, thus avoiding the direct route to Delhi.

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* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 6).

** Arrows.

The Guru had stressed on Banda Bahadur the need to remain cellbate because this was necessary for the achievement of the task entrusted to him. Involvement in family life would have stood as obstruction in his way and made him less effective. The Guru, it may be clarified, was not against adoption of married life. He had himself led married life until the time of creating Khalsa Brotherhood, when he took the vow of celibacy so as to be always prepared for taking up arms against the Mughals. The five Beloved Ones he had selected were also married. But after some time they too remained celibates in the company of the Guru. Banda Singh, as a *bairagi* sadhu, was already a *brahamchari*, without any family attractions or fear of death. It was, therefore, necessary for him to stick to that path in order to keep himself ever ready for warfare.

History records that Maharana Partap was a valiant patriot but he could not tolerate the pangs of hunger from which his small children suffered. Had he remained a celebate that situation would not have arisen.

Hitler, the German dictator of the second world war, whose character had shaped him for the life of a military general, did not think of marrying. That was the reason why he succeeded to a great extent in vanquishing his enemies. But when, due to ambition, he went out to distant places to fight, his success turned into failure and before deciding to commit suicide, he wrote in his will as follows :

"During the days when I had to fight in battles it was my belief that I would not be able to bear the burden of married life. That is why I did not go in for marriage. But now, towards the fag end of my life, I have decided to marry the lady who had been my friend for the past several years. Her only desire is that she should die with me as my wife. My decision will thus help her in fulfilling her desire." This will was written by Hitler, in greater detail, on April 29, 1945 A.D.*

The examples of Maharana Partap and Hitler have been cited as they were world-known personalities. The Guru knew fully well that the Rajputs, who had offered their

* Reproduced from "Fateh" weekly, Aug. 4, 1971.

daughters and sisters in marriage to the Mughal rulers, would also try to entice Banda Singh with such offers. This was also another reason for the Guru to emphasise the necessity of Banda Singh remaining a bachelor. Had he kept his vow he would not have suffered so much towards the end, as he actually did.

Even then, Banda Singh deserves high praise for the determination and courage with which he agreed to take up cudgels with the imperial army. He did not lose heart when he heard about the Guru's demise in Nanded. On the contrary, he redoubled his efforts to achieve the Guru's mission. He abandoned the role of a recluse and became a full-fledged Singh after receiving the baptism of the double-edged sword. He avenged the death of two small sons and mother of the Guru by killing the Governor of Sirhind who had prepetrated that crime and by reducing that town to shambles. The Sikhs will ever remain grateful to Banda Singh for his heroic deeds and will be only doing their duty by observing his martyrdom day with due solemnity and adoration.

ANOTHER MISUNDERSTANDING CLEARED

Many non-Sikh historians have described Banda Singh as Banda Bairagi or Banda Bahadur, nor have they mentioned anything about his having been baptised by the Guru. The author of "Suraj Prakash" has also not been very specific about it. But the fact remains that Banda Singh was made the leader of the Khalsa by the Guru. That status could not have been given to a non-believer in Sikh tenets and discipline, nor could have the Guru decided to bestow his arrows to a person who had not accepted his baptism. As already pointed out, even the bestowal of the sword to Banda Singh was objected to by Bhai Daya Singh and other prominent Sikhs. They would have certainly not agreed to be led by Banda Singh if he had not been baptised.

Moreover, the following recorded evidences prove conclusively that Banda Singh did take the Guru's baptism and became a full-fledged Khalsa.

(1) Bhai Vir Singh, on the strength of "Sau Sakhi", has commented that Guru Gobind Singh had told Banda Singh as follows :

ਸੁਨ ਬੰਦੇ ਤੁਮ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪੰਥ । ਮਿਲੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਪਾਹਿਲ ਸੰਥ ।*

(Listen Banda, you have joined the Khalsa Brotherhood. You have taken the 'Pahul' as well as the Guru Mantar).

(2) Rattan Singh Bhangu has recorded the following lines in "Panth Prakash".

ਤਬ ਉਨ ਕਹਿਉ ਮੈਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਤੇਰਾ । ਮੈਂ ਤੋਹਿ ਸਿਖ, ਗੁਰੂ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ।
ਹਮ ਨੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਤੂੰ ਬੀ ਰਲਾਇਆ । ਤੈਂ ਭੀ ਖਾਲਸਿਉਂ ਵੰਡਾ ਪਾਇਆ ।

(Then Banda said to the Guru, "I am your Banda, your Sikh, and you are my Guru". The Guru replied, "I have included you in the fold of the Khalsa. You too have established your claim to Khalsa Brotherhood).

(3) Ahmed Shah Batalvi has written in his book** that, after the initial conversation the Guru had with Madho Das, the latter agreed, with all humility, to become the Guru's Banda, which undertaking he fulfilled by receiving baptism of the double-edged sword.

(4) Ala-ud-Din Mufti in his book*** written in 1854 A.D. has stated that Banda, after hearing the Guru, became a Sikh in all sincerity and, on receiving the 'pahul', was ready to fight with the Mughals.

(5) Mohd. Latif has written**** that "Govind and Banda became intimate friends and the former's pursuasive eloquence and religious zeal made such a deep impression on the mind of Banda that he was initiated into 'pahul' and became a disciple of the Guru".

(6) Macauliffe also says***** "The Guru instructed Banda in the tenets of his religion and, in due time, baptised him according to the new rites. On this occasion, Banda received the new name of Gurbaksh Singh".

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*"Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 6).
**"Umdat Twarikh".
***"Ibrat Nama"
****"The History of the Punjab", p. 274.
*****"The Sikh Religion", Part V, p. 238.

(7) C.H. Payne writes in his book* as follows :
"Here (in Nanded) he (the Guru) spent much of his time in the company of a *bairagi* hermit, afterwards known as Banda, the slave, whom he converted to his own faith and baptised and to whom he became so much attached that he nominated him his successor, not as Guru but as commander of the forces of the Khalsa".

(8) Mcgregor in his book** writes that "Banda immediately consented, received the Pahoodee and became a Sikh".

(9) In his book***, Dr. Gokul Chand Narang mentions "Guru Gobind Singh's persuasive power and religious enthusiasm had such a deep impression on the mind of Madho Das that he became Sikh". Again, on page 242 of the same book he says that "Chajja Singh" took 'pahul' from the hands of Banda Singh." If Banda Singh had himself not been baptised, how could he administer the 'pahul to Chajja Singh ? This Chajja Singh, later on, became a valiant Sardar of the Bhangi Misal.

(10) Lala Ghanaiya Lal also records in his book**** that Banda became a disciple of Guru Gobind Singh and, after receiving the 'pahul', became his Sikh.

(11) The most important evidence is the fact that after Banda Singh, Ranjit Singh and the other *gaddi-nashins* who followed him, like Arjan Singh, Kharak Singh, Daya Singh etc. were all baptised Sikhs. The main reasons for the doubt about Banda Singh's baptism were the religious and political differences that had arisen between the arthodox *Tat Khalsa* and Banda Singh and which had been exploited by ignorant Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike. Actually, the following Hukam Nama of Jaunpur issued by Banda Singh removes all doubts on this issue :

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*"A Short History of the Sikhs", p. 43.
**"The History of the Sikhs", p. 106.
***"Transformation of Sikhism", p. 257.
****"Tarikh-i-Punjab", p. 56.

ੴ ਫਤੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ

"ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਚੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਥੈ ਸਰਬਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜਉਨਪੁਰ ਕਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਖੇਗਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਪਣਾ, ਜਨਮ ਸਵਰੈਗਾ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੋ, ਪੰਜ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਬੰਨਿ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਦੇਖਦਿਆਂ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਆਵਣਾ। ਖਾਲਸੇ ਕੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਰਹਿਣਾ। ਭੰਗ, ਤਮਾਕੂ, ਹਫੀਮ, ਪੋਸਤ, ਦਾਰੂ ਅਮਲ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਖਾਣਾ। ਮਾਸ, ਮਛਲੀ, ਪਿਆਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਖਾਣਾ। ਚੋਰੀ, ਜਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨੀ। ਅਸਾਂ ਸਤਜੁੱਗ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਆਪੋ ਵਿਚ ਪਿਆਰ ਕਰਣਾ। ਮੇਰਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਰਹੇਗਾ ਤਿਸ ਦੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਹੁੜੀ ਕਰੇਗਾ। ਮਿਤੀ ਪੋਹ ੧੨ ਸੰਮਤ ਪਹਿਲਾ।"*

(EK Onkar Fateh Darshan—The true Lord has ordained that the Guru will protect the Khalsa of Jaunpur. Always remember the Guru, your life will be redeemed. You are the Khalsa of the Timeless Lord. Come immediately on receipt of this order, fully equipped with five arms. Follow the 'rehat' (discipline) of the Khalsa. Do not use *bhang*, tobacco, opium or liquor, also avoid eating meat, fish and onion. Shun thieving and adultery. We have brought heavenly peace to the world, you should love each other. It is my commandment that whoever observes the 'rehat' (discipline) of the Khalsa will be saved by the Guru—Miti Poh 12 Samvat Pahla).

Obviously, carelessness on the part of our historians and research scholars has been responsible for allowing the anti-Sikh elements to depict Banda Singh as a non-Amritdhari *bairagi* in their prejudiced writings. In this connection, it would also be desirable to clarify that in using the term 'Fateh Darshan' on top of the Hukam Nama, Banda Singh had the apparent intention of bringing the concepts of 'Fateh' and 'Darshan' together. Having been a vaishnav *bairagi* he was also against the use of meat, liquor and other intoxicants. This matter is, however, of no significance.

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* This Hukam Nama consists of ten lines and was sent in December, 1710 A.D. The Delhi Gurdwara Managing Committee had displayed this Hukam Nama in the exhibition held by them in 1967 A.D.

BANDA BAHADUR'S SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

We have already mentioned that Banda Bahadur was not an ordinary man. He had, with all his *tantric* powers, tested the Guru's greatness. The Guru also treated him as if he was an old acquaintance of his past lives and with his blessings transformed him from a *tantric bairagi* to a spiritually enlightened soul. The Guru passed away in Nanded in 1708 A.D. It was in 1710 A.D. i.e. after nearly one and half years that Banda Singh had destoyed Sirhind.* Meanwhile, he had succeeded in subduing small towns and, with the help of the Sikhs whom the Guru had sent with him, won the hearts of numerous fighting men of the Punjab. The blessings bestowed on him by the Guru had redoubled his strength, both physical and spiritual, and made him the accepted leader of the Khalsa. Rattan Singh Bhangu has protrayed him thus in "Panth Prakash:"

ਯੋਂ ਕਰ ਬੰਦੇ ਭਈ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ । ਤਬ ਬੰਦਾ ਭਯੋ ਨਿਸਚਲ ਚੀਤ ।
ਪੁਤ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸ ਦ੍ਰਿਾਏ ਪੂਤ । ਦੁੱਧ ਮੰਗੈ ਦੇ ਦੁੱਧ ਬਹੁਤ ।
ਜੇਕਰ ਕੋਈ ਦੁਖੀਆ ਆਵੈ । ਕਰ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਤਿਸ ਦੁਖ ਮਿਟਾਵੈ ।
ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਜਾਪ ਜਪਾਵੈ । ਜੋ ਮਾਂਗੈ ਤਿਸ ਸੋਉ ਦਿਵਾਵੈ ।
ਐਸੀ ਜੱਗ ਮੈਂ ਪਰ ਗਈ ਧਾਂਕ । ਆਏ ਮਿਲੈ ਰਾਣਾ ਅੌ ਰਾਂਕ ।
ਦੂਰਤ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਨਿੰਦੱਤ ਆਵੈ । ਹੋਇ ਨੇੜ ਬਹੁ ਚਰਨੀ ਪਾਵੈ ।੧੦।

(Thus Banda felt satisfied and his mind became restful. He granted the boon of son or milk (prosperity) to whosoever came to seek it. If any one in difficulty came to him, he would pray for him and remove his difficulty. He advised everyone to remember and repeat the name of *Waheguru* and granted whatever he wanted. He became so well-known that both the rich and the poor desired to meet him. If any evil-minded person came from a distant place, he too felt so overwhelmed on seeing him that he touched his feet).

Such was the result of the blessings bestowed on Banda Singh by Guru Gobind Singh. Unlike Guru Har Rai who did not go to Aurangzeb himself but sent his elder son, Ram Rai, to attend the emperor's court (where he unwittingly showed seventy two types of miracles to please the emperor),

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 7) and Bhai Vir Singh's comments thereon.

Guru Gobind Singh taught his Sikhs to fight with the enemies and lay down their lives, if necessary, while fighting. But in the case of Banda Singh, he had, in addition to preparing him for fighting with the Mughals, equipped him with enhanced spiritual powers to help the poor and the needy, wherever necessary. Banda Singh, first of all, camped in Khar Khoda, near Sonepat in the Punjab. From there he conquerred Sonepat, Kaithal, Samana, Ghurham, Shahabad, Mustaffabad, Kapuri, Sadhaura etc. and then forced the Governor of Sirhind to surrender—all within a period of one and a half years after starting from Nanded. History records that, with the Guru's blessings and with co-operation of other leaders of the Khalsa Panth, he also conquered Loh Garh, Raj Ghat, Saharanpur, Behat, Nanauta, Jallalabad, Karnal, Kunjpura, Nahan, Behrampur, Raiput, Kalanaur, Batala, Kasur and several other towns and became the supreme ruler of all conquerred areas. Had he continued to co-operate with and remain under the guidance of the Khalsa Panth, as ordained by the Guru, he might have become the sovereign ruler of the entire country. This is, however, the subject of a separate chapter of history.

AUTHOR'S PERSONAL VIEWS

In the opinion of some people, it might appear that in sending Banda Singh to the Punjab, the Guru had transferred his responsibility to a stranger in order to secure peace of mind for himself. But this was not so. On the other hand, the Guru sought to make use of the interim period to plan his future strategy, vis-a-vis Bahadur Shah and the Mughal rule as a whole. While at Agra, the emperor had asked for a further time limit of one year to fulfil his promise and the Guru had agreed to it. That period of one year had also elapsed. During their stay in Nanded the Guru must have again reminded the emperor but the latter was dodging and giving evasive replies on one pretext or the other. Perhaps, the emperor was thinking that after giving precious gifts and ornamental decoration like *dhuk-dhuki* to the Guru, he had won over the latter and there could be no further danger from him.

But the Guru knew the emperor's mind. He had already written to the Sikhs of Dhaul (near Anandpur) about his impending visit to the Punjab. The purchase of some land in Nanded, as proved to be his own from signs of past life, was apparently a clever move to show to the emperor that he (the Guru) had decided to settle in the Deccan, away from the Punjab. Thus, by diverting the emperor's attention, the Guru had taken the next step in his strategy by sending Banda Singh and some Sikhs in advance to arouse the people of the Punjab and prepare the ground for continuing the fight with the Mughals. The third step that the Guru had planned to take was that when, after being free from the Deccan, the emperor would march on long expedition against the Marathas*, the Guru would also move out of Nanded and join Banda Singh without any fear of interception on the way. All these indications must have been given by the Guru to Banda Singh before sending him to the Punjab as commander of the Khalsa forces. No ruler would ever despatch his commander on any fighting expedition without ensuring full support to him.

To fight against the mighty Mughal empire was no easy task. Already seven members of the Guru's family had laid down their lives as martyrs in non-violent and violent fights against the Mughals. But the despotic empire had yet to be rooted out. The Guru could not have, therefore, left that important task to be performed by Banda Singh alone. In fact, he had chalked out an elaborate plan to arouse the Rajputs as well and, with their help, join Banda Singh to launch a final attack on the centre of the Mughal authority. Even in selecting Banda Singh for this mission the Guru had to exercise great precaution. Only a really capable and daring person with strong faith in God and with spiritual attainments could have led the Khalsa forces. Just as out of all the five Pandavas, Sri Krishna's choice fell on Arjun, who had almost given up courage to fight and to arouse

* History relating to Banda Bahadur's period shows that Shiva Ji's grandson was a source of anxiety for the emperor. His own younger brother, Kam Baksh, was also antagonistic towards him and he wanted to proceed against both of them.

whose sense of duty, Srl Krishna had to recite eighteen chapters of the Gita, so could Guru Gobind Singh, throughout his journey to the Deccan, locate only Banda Singh who possessed the requisite qualities. He too had to be weaned away from his *tantric* practices and made to realise his duty by arousing the physical and spiritual powers, which he had gained but which he was frittering away in meaningless pursuits. It was after making such a careful selection that the Guru had sent Banda Singh to the Punjab to work according to the plan chalked out by him.

But destiny willed otherwise. Hardly had fifteen to twenty days passed after the departure of Banda Singh that the Guru was attacked with a dagger by an unsuspected Pathan as would be described later on. At that time, Banda Singh was still on his way to the Punjab. According to Lala Nanak Chand Naaz*, it was in March 1709 A.D. that Banda Singh reached near Mathura and Bharatpur. During the intervening period he must have been travelling through Rajasthan and meeting the rulers there who had promised military aid to the Guru. He had also to approach the Brar Sikhs and seek their armed help after satisfying them about his leadership and the mission entrusted to him by the Guru. It is recorded in "Muntkhib-ul-Lubab"** that, in Kaithal, Banda Bahadur had 4000 mounted and several thousands foot soldiers with him from which it appears that he was able to raise only that much strength from among the Rajputs and the Brars. The Sikhs from Majha could not have yet joined him. That is why, instead of invading Delhi direct, he had first proceeded towards Sonepat in the Punjab. Had the Rajputs provided larger reinforcements, to Banda Singh, as they had promised to the Guru, Delhi could have been surrounded and made to surrender, particularly when Bahadur Shah was still stuck up in the Deccan and his brother, Kam Bakhsh, and the Marathas were both inimically inclined towards him.

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* "Banda Bahadur" by Lala Nanak Chand Naaz, p. 53.

**Quoted in "Banda Bahadur" by Lala Nanak Chand Naaz, p. 53.

Banda Singh, it will be recalled, had given a promise to the Guru that he will not marry and will work under the guidance of the Khalsa leaders. So long as he complied with these conditions, he gained victory after victory. He had already started dreaming of becoming an emperor. On the coins that he issued to commemorate his victories, appeared the following words :

"ਦੇਗ ਤੇਗ ਫਤਹਿ ਵਾ ਨਸਰਤ ਬੇਦਰੰਗ,
ਯਾਫਤ ਅਜ਼ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ"*

(The blessings of *deg* (economic prosperity to help the poor, *teg* (sword power to destroy the wicked), *fateh* (victory over the enemies) and instant succour have been bestowed by Guru Nanak—Guru Gobind Singh).

But the hill chieftains, who were not favourably inclined towards the Guru, prompted Banda Singh to break his vow and marry. That engrossed him in worldly affairs and reduced his physical and spiritual strength. He also formed his own separate Panth and called it Bandai Khalsa. Thus, there was an open estrangement with the Tat Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh, from whom he could not, therefore, expect any more cooperation. He tried, with his followers, to engage the Mughal armies in several battles, but was ultimately arrested and executed mercilessly in Delhi on June 19, 1716 A.D. It must, however, be said to the credit of Banda Singh that right upto the last moment he did not give up his Sikh faith and died with *Waheguru* on his lips.

It must also be recorded here that some years back, Hindu Sabha leaders, like Bhai Parmanand, had started describing Banda Singh as Banda Bairagi. This was an attempt to depict him as a Hindu recluse and not as a full-fledged baptised Sikh. The question arises that if Banda had the powers, why did he not do what he actually did, as a *bairagi*. In fact, knowing full well as to what was happen-in the country as a result of the Mughal invasions, he had escaped from the Punjab and come towards the Deccan in the garb of a *tantric* yogi. It was only after his meeting

* cf. "Mahan Kosh" by Bhai Kahan Singh, p. 191-92, and "Panjab and Sher-i-Panjab" by Dr. Harnam Singh Shan, p. 21-22.

with Guru Gobind Singh and receiving the baptism of the double-edged sword at his hands that he became enlightened and was able to achieve whatever successes stand to his credit in life. He is now a well-known figure in history and we should all be careful that the real facts about any historical personality are not allowed to be distorted.

BRAR SIKHS DEMAND PAY

The Brar Sikhs who had accompanied the Guru to Nanded had seen that the Guru had purchased some land in that town, with the obvious intention of residing there. They had also seen how some Sikhs had already been sent to the Punjab with Banda Singh. They too desired to go back to their homes and not made to stay in the Deccan, so for away from their families. They, along with some other Sikhs, therefore, pressed the Guru to pay them the arrears of their pay and allow them to go home like other Sikhs who had already left. The Guru told them to have patience for some more days but they were adamant.

At that time the Guru was sitting at the place in the town, now known as Gurdwara Sangat Sahib. He gave some indications to Bhai Daya Singh of a place where Guru Nanak's treasure lay buried and asked him to dig it out from there and bring it. This was the place where Gurdwara Mal Tekri is now situated at some distance outside the town. The Sikhs found that a Muslim fakir, named Lakkar Shah, was staying at that place and was sweeping it daily. In his presence they dug out the treasure and brought bag-loads of the same to the place where the Guru was sitting. The Guru distributed the money to the Brars and other Sikhs in shield-loads and whatever was left was ordered to be taken back and reburied at the original place. The fakir, who had also come to see the Guru, was greatly astonished but was told not to try to dig out the reburied treasure as he would not be able to find anything there. Instead, he was asked to continue his service of sweeping the place for which he would get some remuneration every day. According to local tradition, Lakkar Shah used to find one gold coin every day in the sweepings.

BAHADUR SHAH PRESENTS A DIAMOND

The purpose for which Banda Singh and five Sikhs had been sent to the Punjab was kept as a close secret among the Guru and a few leading Sikhs, like Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh. Even the *bairagi* followers of Banda Singh did not know it. This secrecy was necessary as Bahadur Shah was also camping in Nanded during those days and it was not desirable for the secret to leak out. The mere sending of a *bairagi* recluse and a few Sikhs to the north was of no significance for the emperor.

Bahadur Shah knew in his heart that the Guru was not pleased with him on account of the former's inability to fulfil his promise till then. They were also not meeting each other frequently. Once, after enquiring from Bhai Daya Singh about the Guru's daily routine, the emperor met the Guru when the latter had gone to the river bank for a morning walk. He offered a very costly diamond, which he had acquired after killing Tana Shah of the Deccan, to the Guru as a present and expressed his regrets for not being able to make good his pledge on account of fear of Muslim law which might estrange other provinces also from him. He admitted that he had not told the truth when he asked for one year's further time limit. The Guru exchanged the usual salutation and, appreciating the quality of the diamond, took it in his hand and threw it in the river. The emperor was astonished at the Guru's indifference and thought it to be an indication of his displeasure. After some cursory talk, the emperor left without saying anything further about the diamond. The place where this event took place is now known as Gurdwara Hira Ghat.

SHIKAR GHAT

About two and a half miles away from Hira Ghat, the Guru, while out for hunting, pursued a running hare and killed it. When the Sikhs enquired about the reason for taking so much trouble to kill such a small animal, the Guru laughed and explained that the hare had, in one of its past lives, lived in human form as Moola *Kirar*. He had affronted Guru Nanak and had, therefore, been passing

through a cycle of births and deaths. It was time for his soul to be redeemed which he had done by ending his life as a hare. This place is now known as Shikar Ghat where a beautiful gurdwara and a tank have been built at a cost of several lakhs of rupees. It is situated at a little higher level from the river and the connecting road and commands a magnificient view of the town and surrounding areas.

OFFER OF A NAGINA

Like all great souls, Guru Goblnd Singh had a love for dlaces with running waters, green hilltops, gardens and other beautiful scenes of nature. He had enjoyed his stay in Paonta on the bank of the Jamuna and in Babhor on the bank of the Sutlej. Such a place was available in Nanded near the hermitage of Banda *bairagi* on the bank of the river Godavari. The Guru was once sitting there and musing over the munificence of God, who had created such bewitching scenes of nature, when a rich devotee brought a *nagina* (precious stone) as a present for the Guru. The latter held the glittering stone in his hand, appreciated its beauty, and threw it in the river. The devotee was astonished and he felt in his heart that the Guru had simply wasted away an article of such a high value. The Guru noticed his bewilderment and told him that if the stone was so valuable he should dive in the river and recover it from there. When the man actually dived, he came across numerous precious stones of the type he had offered to the Guru. He realised his folly and begged to be excused. The place where that precious stone was thrown in the river is now known as Nagina Ghat.

A pertinent point that can be raised here is that the Guru had seldom refused to accept offerings from his devotees, irrespective of their value. What prompted him to throw away that particular offer made to him ? The obvious explanation could be that, having thrown away the emperor's diamond in the river a few days earlier, the Guru did not like to create an impression that he had discriminated against the emperor and thereby insulted him. The news about the devotee's precious stone having been thrown in the river was bound to reach the emperor who was

camping in the same town. It was through foresight that the Guru accorded similar treatment to both the offers.

PAYMENT OF A LOAN

Once when the Guru was sitting in the congregation, a few known Pathans came and showed to the Guru a sort of promissory note, which the latter had given to them in Anandpur in lieu of price of the horses purchased from them. The Guru recognised his signatures on the note and told them :

"Your claim is genuine but here in Nanded our financial position is tight. We are having even the daily provisions from the royal store. If you wait for some more time and show this note of mine to any of the Sikh sardars in the Punjab, he will pay to you the actual amount, along with interest thereon". The Pathans replied : "But, Sir, it is not permissible for us to accept interest". The Guru was pleased with the reply and they went away after receiving the Guru's blessings. Later on, during Banda Singh's times or the Misal period, those Pathans were able to recover many times more money by showing the Guru's note to several Sikh sardars.

BATCH OF UDASIS ARRIVES

Some Udasi followers of Bhai Gurditta (uncle of Guru Gobind Singh) had been sent to places like Hyderabad and Jagan Nath Puri for missionary work. Two of the prominent followers, Gopal Das and Balu Hasna, came to meet their co-religionist, named Govind Sahib, in the Deccan. When they all heard that Guru Gobind Singh was staying in Nanded, they went in a batch to meet him there. There were also other religious centres, like Mata Anjali's temple, near Shikar Ghat, which used to be visited by roaming pilgrims.

The Guru was also pleased to meet them after such a long time and they all stayed in the Guru's camp. When the emperor came to know that a large number of visitors had arrived in the Guru's camp, he ordered the quantity of provisions being supplied from the royal store to be doubled. According to Aurangzeb's orders the entire expenditure on

the Guru's entourage to the Deccan was being met from out of the confiscated property of the Guru. Although Bahadur Shah had become friendly with the Guru, he was not allowing the latter's property to be returned to him fully, lest he might restart preparations to oppose the imperial government.

MATA SAHIB DEVI SENT BACK TO DELHI

The Guru had come to know that Bahadur Shah had decided to go towards Hyderabad. He was also, therefore, looking for a suitable opportunity to return to the Punjab. In anticipation of this move, he decided to send back Mata Sahib Devi to Delhi, under the care of the elderly Bhai Ram Kuar, who was an esteemed descendent of Baba Buddha. Though both Mata Sahib Devi and Bhai Ram Kuar were reluctant to get separated from the Guru, they were prevailed upon to act according to the Guru's wishes in view of the peculiar situation developing around him. Mata Sahib Devi was advised by the Guru to keep company with the Mata Sundri Ji in Delhi and also to spend her time in meditating on God's Name.

It was Bhai Ram Kuar, who, on return to Delhi, recorded all that had happened in the Deccan, through the pen of Bhai Sahib Singh, the script-writer. The "Nanak Prakash" and the "Suraj Prakash", compiled later on by Bhai Santokh Singh, are based on the evidences recorded by Bhai Ram Kuar.

BAHADUR SHAH'S MARCH TOWARDS HYDERABAD

After two to three months of stay in Nanded, Bahadur Shah decided to march towards Hyderabad himself. His commanders had, by then, subdued most of the leading rebel rulers of the Deccan but the Maratha sardars in the south had still not surrendered themselves and accepted the suzerainty of the Mughal emperor. Before leaving he came to see the Guru and requested him to accompany him on that expedition also. With him came his courtiers, ministers, scholars and judicial officers, all wearing costly jewellery, with the object of making an impression on the Guru about their wealth and prosperity.

They were received with the customary salutations and seated in opporpriate places. The Guru enquired from the emperor about the developments in the Deccan and the object of his march towards Hyderabad. He knew what was in the mind of the emperor and replied to him on the following lines :

"You may march towards Hyderabad according to your own plan, but I have no desire to go further south from here. I had undertaken to support your cause against your brother, Tara Azam, in order to remove the injustice being done to you. But it is not proper for me to join you in proceeding against the Marathas. You may not, therefore, depend on me for this purpose."*

The emperor understood the tone of the Guru's reply but still smilingly said :

"I have to go quickly but will still hope that you would be good enough to follow me at your convenience. may be for sight-seeing and for going out on walks, as before."

HINDUISM, ISLAM AND KHALSA PANTH

At the time of parting, when talk in lighter vein was going on, the emperor started a religious discussion by addressing the Guru as follows :

"What type of religion do the Hindus have ? It is a hollow faith under which they make idols out of stones, draw portraits on the walls and then worship them. Then they place food and sweets before them and think they have fed their gods and goddesses. But everything remains lying there, which they later on eat themselves. What can those gods do which are made by the devotees themselves ?

"Then they throw water towards the sun. How can that water reach their dead ancestors ? They also feed the ***brahmins*** lavishly with varieties of food and fruits and also burn incense, sesame seeds and ghi in fire. All this is called

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* See "Biography of Guru Gobind Singh" (Urdu) by Lala Daulat Ram Arya in which it is mentioned that the Guru refused to keep company with Bahadur Shah on acoount of the latter's faithlessness and hypocrisy.

havan which we consider to be a false ritual. But Hindus take it to be true mode of worship. What are your views about it ?"

The Guru replied : "It is correct that all these practices are prevalent in Hindu faith. Just as the farmers till their land and feed their cattle in the hope that they will reap the crops and collect the milk, so do the Hindus love and worship the idols and portraits of their gods and goddesses and concentrate their attention on them in order to have their desires fulfilled.

"God has created both theists and atheists in the world. The former are mostly Hindus and the latter are mostly Muslims. Hindus are theists because they believe in God, and in the concept of the next world; they perform deeds according to their rites and customs and, in return, expect to go to heaven. They also believe in transmigration of soul. The Muslims too believe in God and in the existence of heavens and hell. But they are atheists in the sense that they do not have faith in the doctrines of Karma and Transmigration of Soul. Still they do not deny that on the day of judgement they will have to get their accounts settled. In this background, everyone likes his own religion. To you, your religion is good and for us, our religion is good.

"Then the rituals performed by Hindus are like giving water to the roots of a tree. The fruits are gained from the top. They believe that their dead ancestors receive the fruits of their deeds. This may be correct provided the deeds are performed with good intentions and honest earnings."*

He continued : "Those who have faith in Islam worship tombs and graves of their ancestors who lie buried thereunder and whose mortal frames become one with the dust from which they are made. Just as Muslims expect some reward from the spirits of their elders, so do the Hindus

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* "ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗੈ ਸੋ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿ ਖਟੇ ਘਾਲ ਦੇਇ" (ਵਾਰ ਆਸਾ)
(Nanak, man receives in the next life what he earns with the sweat of his brow and shares with others in the present life.—Var Asa).

seek benifits from the spirits of their ancestors and, therefore, try to keep them happy".*

Guru Gobind Singh further told the emperor :

"Again, the Muslims call themselves God's slaves and say their prayers before Him. He is called Allah, the pure and deceitless. But He is not seen anywhere, for He has no shape or a particular abode. Still they pray with their faces towards the *kaaba*, keep fasts and recite *darood* (prayer) while offering thick wheat cakes through the priests of Sultan Pir. Is this not all meaningless ? If it is not, then rest assured that whatever is done with good intentions, is acceptable, whether it is done by a Muslim or a Hindu."**

Continuing, the Guru said :

"Just as the Muslims consider their prophets to be ever alive before whom they bow and pray five times a day, so do the Hindus perform worship before the idols thrice daily. The difference is only of name and language used in invocations. Only those among them are noble who recite the name of Allah or Ram with sincerity and purity of mind. The rest is all show and hypocrisy. Guru Nanak has, therefore, said :

"ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਉ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕਾ ਦਿਲ ਹਛੈ ਮੁਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ॥
ਅਵਰ ਦਿਵਾਜੇ ਦੁਨੀ ਕੇ ਝੂਠੇ ਅਮਲ ਕਰੇਹੁ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 140)

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* Note : The Hajis who go to Mecca for pilgrimage find it obligatory to stone the graves of three devils who were considered to be enemies of the prophets. They also strike the graves with their shoes in the hope that the spirits of the devils will feel insulted and those of the prophets will feel happy. Similarly, the Hindus burn the effigies of Ravana, his brother Kumbh Karan, and son Megh Nad, every year on Dussehra day on account of their evil deeds in kidnapping Sri Ram Chander's wife, Sita, and keeping her in their custody in Lanka, until Ram Chander killed Ravana and destroyed his country. This is done to please the soul of Sri Ram Chander. Still, both among the Muslims and the Hindus, there are persons who keep themselves above these things and have their unstinted faith in one true eternal God.

**"Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 17).

(Remember God's name with purity of heart. All other practices are mere false shows).

"No one is acceptable in the court of the Lord, without good intentions. Only he can approach Him who does not differentiate between *Khuda* and *Ishwar*. All others waste their lives in performing meaningless rituals." Guru Nanak has tought :

"ਕਲਹਿ ਬੁਰੀ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ ਵਾਦੇ ਖਪੀਐ ॥ ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਵੇਕਾਰਿ ਭਰਮੇ ਪਚੀਐ ॥
ਰਾਹ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਇਕ ਜਾਣ ਸੋਈ ਸਿਝਸੀ ॥ ਕੁਫਰ ਗੋ ਕੁਫਰਾਣੈ ਪਇਆ ਦਝਸੀ ॥"
(ਪੰਨਾ 142)

(Unnecessary discussions create only dissensions in the world. Without faith in God, we only fritter away our energies).

"Because I found both the Muslims and the Hindus treading the path of duality, I have started a third faith, called the Khalsa Panth, which will worship only one Timeless God and give up all beliefs and rituals which lead to communal strifes. The Khalsa is still like a new-born child. When it grows up, it will gain strength. It will not worship idols, graves and tombs but will adore only one eternal and formless God. This Khalsa is God's own army and has been created with His pleasure and desire".

The Guru further spoke to the emperor as follows :

"Just as for worldly men, it is necessary to have money for expenditure, so do their souls, after death, need some succour. Some souls remain satisfied with the benefits accrued from *bhakti* performed by them during their own lifetime, but for others, the Hindus give charities in the belief that these would reach the souls of their dead ancestors. Similarly, the Turks also pray for their dead relatives and recite special prayers on making offerings at tombs etc. Both have the same significance."

AUTHOR'S VIEWS

It is evident that the emperor came to the Guru along with his ministerial, religious and judicial officers, and intentionally started religious discussion in their presence in order to impress on them his deep faith in Islamic

concepts by making a mockery of Hindu faith and practices. Otherwise, at the time of his departure for Hyderabad, he would have come to meet the Guru alone or in the company of only a few attendants. By adopting such a course, the emperor wanted to create a feeling of dislike for the Hindus in the mind of the Guru and make the latter agree to accompany him on the expedition against Hindu Marathas. He also tried to show that by converting Hindus to Islam, he was performing a good deed for the infidels. But the Guru's replies put him on the guard and he had nothing to say in defence of what he had said. The whole conversation* between the emperor and the Guru must have displeased the *mullahs* who had come with the emperor. Those were the persons who used to decree that the non-believers should be either converted to Islam or put to death. In any case they could not tolerate any leading Hindu or Sikh to remain outside the pale of Islam. It was on account of their fear that Bahadur Shah was unable so far to make good the promise he had given to the Guru that he would do justice.

It was evident that the emperor and the Guru had different religious views. The former looked at religious matters from political angle, whereas the latter had higher spiritual approach. The two had, therefore, to adopt different paths. This is also the conclusion drawn by Shri Ranbir in his book on Guru Gobind Singh**. No wonder, therefore, if on their return to the royal camp, the *mullahs* might have instigated the emperor against the Guru and obtained his approval of the conspiracy which they had been hatching eversince they found the emperor developing friendly relations with the Guru.

ROYAL CONSPIRACY TO ASSASSINATE THE GURU

It will be recalled that the Zafar Nama written by Guru Gobind Singh from Dina had brought about a feeling of repentence in the mind of the then emperor Aurangzeb. As

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* According to comments of Bhai Vir Singh on Ain 2, Ansu 17 of "Suraj Prakash", there is no mention of this conversation in "Sau Sakhi".

**"Hem Kunt Ka Mussafir", p. 284.

a result, he had issued instructions to the governors of the provinces to withdraw all orders issued against the Guru. Those instructions must have also been received by the Governor of Sirhind, although he did not know the real reason. But as compliance of royal orders was obligatory, the Governor of Sirhind had stopped taking any open action against the Guru or oppressing the Hindu and Sikh population of the Punjab to any great extent.

After some time the Guru had left for the Deccan on the invitation of Aurangzeb but, before he could reach there, Aurangzeb had died. Then the Guru had to help Bahadur Shah against his brother, Tara Azam, in the war of succession. This was done by the Guru on the recommendation of Bhai Nand Lal and on the understanding that Bahadur Shah would fulfil his promise of doing justice in the matter of atrocities committed by the Governor of Sirhind against the members of the Guru's family. It was in response to Bahadur Shah's invitation that the Guru went to Agra and stayed there for some months as the emperor's guest. The emperor had also instructed the Governor of Sirhind to pay rupees three hundred every day to Guru Gobind Singh by way of compensation*, but the Guru was at that time in Agra. Even otherwise he would not have accepted such a compensation.

From Agra, the Guru had accompanied the emperor towards the Deccan. The Governor of Sirhind must have, through secret intelligence, kept himself in touch with these developments, because he knew that the growing friendship between the emperor and the Guru would not be in his interest. Agra is only about five days horse journey from Sirhind and special messengers could easily move between these places to bring the day to day news.

Dreading similar reprisals as were meted out to Chandu Lal at the hands of Guru Hargobind, with the connivance

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* cf. "Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr. Ganda Singh (p. 54) in which this is reeorded on the evidence of Lala Bakht Mal.

of emperor Jehangir*, Wazid Khan, the Governor of Sirhind, had planned to finish the Guru while he was still in the Deccan. He, therefore, planned to hire a Pathan, who was the son of Painde Khan, whom Guru Hargobind had killed in battle, to do the job. That Pathan originally belonged to Jalandhar but had settled in Sirhind. He was at first not agreeable to go to such a distant place, but his sons, Gul Khan and Attaullah Khan, aged 20-25 years, were made to agree. It is possible that these youngsters might have already been in the employment of Wazid Khan. According to Bhai Kahan Singh**, they were prompted to take revenge from the Guru for the murder of their grandfather, Paindc Khan, by Guru Hargobind. They first came to Delhi and with great humility enquired about the whereabouts of the Guru from Mata Sundri Ji***. Then they went to Nanded and managed to stay close to the Guru's camp there. They also started working as water-carriers in the royal camp. During their spare time they would come and do wood-cutting or sweeping jobs in the Guru's camp in order to show their fidelity to the Sikhs. They saw an atmosphere of friendship between the Mughals in the emperor's camp and the Sikh followers of the Guru. They could also see that the emperor respected the Guru very much. So they were afraid of divulging their intentions to any one and had to keep it as a secret to themselves. But as they were coming in the Guru's camp frequently they remained on the lookout for a suitable opportunity to carry out their nefarious design.

According to "Suraj Prakash", when Gul Khan first saw Guru Gobind Singh in Nanded, he bowed before him and, on inquiry, said that he was the grandson of Painde Khan whom the Guru's grandfather had killed in battle but whose face he had, out of sympathy, shaded at the time of

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* Both Jehangir and his dewan, Chandu Lal, were responsible for the torturous death of Guru Hargobind's father, Guru Arjan Dev.

**"Mahan Kosh", p. 1263.

***cf. "Sikh Itehas Bare" by Dr. Ganda Singh (p. 54) in which this has been mentioned on the evidence of "Khalsa Nama 12-19 Chattar Jogi".

death with his shield. He also told the Guru that his mother had told her that his grandfather, Painde Khan, was to blame. He had been brought up, married and nourished as a wrestler by Guru Hargobind but he proved so ungrateful that he fought with his benefactor and was consequently killed. The Guru liked this truthful version of Gul Khan and gave him five gold coins as a reward. With this, Gul Khan felt encouraged and started doing service in close quarters to the Guru.

Some writers, including Bhai Santokh Singh, have mistakenly stated that the Guru rewarded Gul Khan to prompt him, due to disappointment with life, to take his grandfather's revenge from him (the Guru). This could not have been correct in view of the plans the Guru had made to go to the Punjab in order to reinforce the struggle launched by Banda Singh there.

It is also belied by the tone of Zafar Nama (the Epistle of Victory) which the Guru had written to Aurangzeb. Obviously, such writers have not been able to understand the conspiracy engineered, with the connivance and approval of Bahadur Shah, to assassinate the Guru. Only a writer of independent views, like Lala Daulat Ram Arya, could understand the reality and he has stressed it accordingly in his book.*

Because the Pathan brothers were now moving about freely in Nanded, without raising any suspicion in the minds of the people, it is most likely that they were present at the time of the emperor's meeting with the Guru, before the former left for Hyderabad. They must have also come to know from the *mullahs* about the demoralising effect of the religious discussion which the emperor had with the Guru on the former's mind. They also must have noticed that the reported friendship between the two was shallow. They, therefore, thought it to be an appropriate time to divulge the real objective for which they had been sent to Nanded by the Governor of Sirhind. The *mullahs* thought the presence of the Pathan brothers there to be a blessing in disguise. They would be able, by their intended action, to

* "Swaan-e-Umri, Guru Gobind Singh" (Urdu).

end the life of one who had expressed views opposed to Muslim law and at the same time save the emperor from the ignominy of being ungrateful to the Guru personally.* The whole episode was intended to be depicted as a case of revenge taken by two brave grandsons of a killed Pathan.

THE UNALTERABLE DIVINE WILL

Just as a general's orders have to be carried out by the rank and file in the army, so do the gurus and saints find it obligatory to submit to the unalterable divine will of their sole commander i.e. God, otherwise they no longer remain His messengers.

Sri Krishna used his supernatural powers to save Draupadi from becoming naked in the court of Duryodhan, but he did not obstruct the hunter from hitting him with a mortal arrow while he was lying under a tree in the jungle.

Guru Tegh Bahadur, while sitting in meditation in an underground cell in Baba Bakala, had to employ his spiritual powers to save the sinking ship of Makhan Shah Lubaana, but when it came to sacrificing his own life for the sake of protecting Hindu *dharma*, he did nothing to save himself.

Similarly, Guru Gobind Singh, while sitting in Anandpur, saved Bhai Joga Singh, on his way from Peshawar, from falling in sin by standing guard at a prostitute's house. But he did not, with all his plans and powers, shirk from the inevitable end when it came suddenly. It was the pathan's dagger which had to strike at him and it was his sword which had to cut the pathan killer into two. This is how things were ordained under the Divine dispensation.

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* In "Twarikh Bahadur Shahi", it is written that the Guru must have, during his discourses, said something against the *shariat* which the muslims could not have tolerated. That is why he was killed by the pathan by striking him with a dagger thrice. This viewpoint has also been expressed by Macauliffe.

So long as Mata Sahib Devi stayed in Nanded, she looked after the security arrangements in the Guru's camp. There would always be armed attendants on guard duty outside the tent, where the Guru rested during the day. That is why the mean pathans, who were deputed to assassinate the Guru, could not get an opportunity to carry out their dastardly act till then. But they now knew about her departure for Delhi and also about the unreal sympathy shown by the emperor towards the Guru.

The Guru used to keep his sword and other arms near his bed while resting. Among those arms were two sharp steel daggers which had specially been made and offered to the Guru by a devotee. Gul Khan, who had become a frequent visitor to the Guru's camp, knew where those daggers were kept. It was a cold November night when the Guru lay asleep on his bed on his left side, with his left arm as the headrest. It so happened that the attendant, named Lakha Singh on guard duty, dozed off while sitting outside the tent. On the other side of the tent, Sant Atma Dass, *udasi*, who had come from Burhanpur, was sitting deep in meditation. This situation gave a good chance to Gul Khan to strike. He advised his brother to stand at some distance for help, if needed, and himself sneaked into the tent with naked feet. He picked up one of those two sharp daggers and thrust it on the back of the Guru. This awakened the Guru abruptly and, picking up his sword instantaneously, he chopped off the head of the assassin there and then before he could escape. On hearing the noise and on seeing blood oozing out of the Guru's body, Lakha Singh, enraged at Gul Khan's dastardly act, further cut his body into two. The Guru said to Lakha Singh, "I have already disposed him off to hell, there was no need for you to wield your sword".

The other pathan brother tried to run away but he too was done to death by other Sikhs who had by then reached there. Not knowing who the conspirators were behind this dastardly act, they sent their fast horseriders to inform Bahadur Shah, who had, by then, hardly covered one stage of

his journey, of what had happened. The emperor was aware of the conspiracy and was awaiting the news. In order to show his sympathy towards the Guru, and in order to ward off any suspicion against him, he sent his British surgeon (Dr. Cole) to attend to the Guru. That surgeon rushed to Nanded, cleaned the Guru's wound and stitched it with great care and sympathy. When the wound healed up and the stitches were removed, the Guru rewarded the surgeon with cash and robe of honour. The Sikhs were rejoiced to see the Guru having regained his health.

It is surprising that Shri Ranbir, editor of the 'Milap', has, in his first book* written that the Guru was not attacked by any one but was involved in some accident. But in his second book** he himself and some other writers, whom he has quoted, have expressed the correct views. Such a patently wrong version can only be attributed to Shri Ranbir's desire to please his present day muslims friends by absolving Bahadur Shah and Wazid Khan, Governor of Sirhind, from the charge of conspiracy to kill the Guru. There are clear evidences in "Bahadur Shah Nama", "Guru Sobha Granth" by Kavi Sainapat and in "Gohaj Katha" written by Sant Atam Das *udasi*, in which there is mention of the Guru having been attacked by a pathan with dagger. Lala Daulat Ram Arya has also, in his book***, stated that Bahadur Shah, in his heart of heart, was not happy with the presence of Guru Gobind Singh who was pricking in his side like a thorn. He also knew very well the religious and political views of the Guru. He was dodging him continuously for two years and was looking for a suitable occasion to do away with him". Many other writers have also expressed the same view.

BHAI DAYA SINGH PASSES AWAY

Bhai Daya Singh, particularly, was very happy with the regaining of health by the Guru. One day, while he was

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*"Hem Kunt Ka Mussafir" p. 297.

**"Yugh Purush", p. 346.

***"Swan-e-Umri, Guru Gobind Singh", p. 214.

sitting with the Guru, he started shivering. By the time he reached the place of his residence, his condition worsened. Thinking that his end was near, he recited the *Jap Ji* and after finishing it, breathed his last, apparently due to failure of heart. All the Sikhs were filled with grief to hear the news. The Guru, out of love for the deceased, who was his top-most beloved Sikh and a confidant, again recited his "Khayal Patshahi 10"* which he had earlier done in Machhiwara jungle. He arranged Bhai Daya Singh's cremation in a suitable manner and declared that he had attained salvation.

THE STITCHES BREAK OPEN

Sixteen days after the Guru's recovery from the stabbing wound, an occasion arose for celebrating the return of Guru Har Gobind from Gwalior fort. It was the day of Diwali. Although Bhai Daya Singh's demise was still fresh in the minds of the Sikhs, the Guru asked for all the arms to be washed and displayed on a large wooden dais for the purpose of worshipping them in the customary manner. On that very day, an artisan brought two big and stiff bows, along with two pouches full of arrows, and presented them to the Guru. The offer was very much appreciated and the Guru rewarded the artisan liberally. Being *amavas* (peak of dark nights), lights were lit up and saffron marks were applied to the arms and incense burnt to purify the whole atmosphere. A special congregation was held in which the Guru gave open audience to every body who came. On that occasion, two courtiers sent by Bahadur Shah came riding on elephants to enquire about the Guru's health. On alighting, they came forward and, bowing before the Guru, expressed the emperor's anxiety and condemnation of the foul act of stabbing. The Guru told them that it was all according to the divine Will.

Before departing, those courtiers saw the exhibition of arms minutely, particularly the two big bows on seeing which they smiled. One of them said, "These cannot be wielded by any human being; only an angel would be able

*"ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲ ਮੁਰੀਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ".....

to handle them". The other courtier said, "Such big arms are generally for the sake of display. These are not meant to be used". These words were not liked by the Guru. He asked the courtiers to stay on for some more time. In their presence, the Guru stretched both the bows twice, without caring for his raw wound which had not yet fully healed. Due to extreme pressure exerted on them, the stitches broke open and blood started gushing out of the wound. The Guru gave robes of honour to the courtiers and sent them away. The British surgeon had already left. Night had descended and no other capable surgeon was available in Nanded. The Sikhs themselves cleaned and dressed up the wound as best as they could and made the Guru lie down in bed. The whole of that night was passed in anxiety in the service of the Guru.

On the following day, finding the Sikhs in depressed mood, the Guru consoled them saying, "God's will seems to be different. I would be able to tell you what He intends after consulting Him". The Guru had a tent fixed up which was covered from all sides. Inside, a floor was laid out and made fragrant with incense and flowers. He went and sat on the floor in communion with God to know what the divine Will was. He had given instructions to the Sikhs that no one should come near the tent for one *pahar* i.e. for three hours*. It seems that by doing so the Guru sought divine light to know whether he should get himself treated and pursue the plans be had chalked out with Banda Singh or follow the divine wish if it intended to call him back from the world in the same spirit in which he had been sent there. The Guru alone knows what he did inside the tent for three hours. He must have, true to his nature and faith, prayed to God and expressed himself on the following lines :

"O Lord Almighty, I have been your devotee for several years, nay ages. I was deeply absorbed in meditation at Your lotus feet, when You called me and sent me to this world for starting a new faith with the object of protecting the holy and uprooting the wicked persons.

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* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 19).

"O, Merciful God, I had no power of my own. Just as You had given power to goddess Durga to destroy the demons, or enabled Shri Ram Chander to finish the evil-minded Ravana and engineered the destruction of Kansa at the hands of Shri Krishna, so was I blessed with Your power to weed out the tyrants. I have performed my duty in whatever way You had directed me. Now I had planned to go back to the Punjab to complete the unfinished task. You know my views and intentions very well.

"O, the Eternal Protector, uptil now You had granted me Your protection. Now an ungrateful enemy has inflicted an ugly wound. Should I take it to be a call back from You ? I entrust the entire course of future events to You. I am ready to offer myself in complete submission to Your sweet Will.

"O, the Timeless Lord, You are my father and my mother. Whatever You had given to me, I have offered back to You. Now, do let me know what Your commandment is".

The Guru must have, in that undisturbed solitude, made several other emotional soliloquies and received replies from the Almighty in the following words of *gurbani* :

"ਜਿਨਿ ਤੁਮ ਭੇਜੇ ਤਿਨਹਿ ਬੁਲਾਇ ਸੁਖ ਸਹਜ ਸੇਤੀ ਘਰਿ ਆਉ ॥
ਅਨਦ ਮੰਗਲ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਉ ਸਹਜ ਧੁਨਿ ਨਿਹਚਲ ਰਾਜ ਕਮਾਉ ॥੧॥
ਤੁਮ ਘਰਿ ਆਵਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤ ॥
ਤੁਮਰੇ ਦੋਖੀ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਵਾਰੇ ਅਪਦਾ ਭਈ ਬਤੀਤ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥"

(ਪੰਨਾ 678)

(Whoever sent you has called you back; come, therefore, happily and with peace of mind. Sing the praises of the Lord in a state of mental equipoise and enjoy eternal glory. You are welcome back, O my friend. Your enemies will be chastised by God Himself and all your difficulties will be removed).

Such words must have been like Divine orders for the Guru. He came out of the tent with a smile on his face and, with slow steps, approached his resting place. The Sikhs were filled with anxiety and were longing to hear something from the Guru's mouth. He accordingly spoke

to them on the following lines of *gurbani* :

"ਉਦਕ ਸਮੁੰਦ ਸਲਲ ਕੀ ਸਾਖਿਆ ਨਦੀ ਤਰੰਗ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਸੁਨਹਿ ਸੁੰਨੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ਪਵਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੋਇ ਜਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਬਹੁਰ ਹਮ ਕਾਹੇ ਆਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਆਵਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਤਿਸੈ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੂਝ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 1103)

(Like the water in ocean and the waves in river, we will merge with You, O Lord. When the soul becomes one with Braham, we assume the universal role of air. Why need we then come back to the world ? Birth and death occur according to God's Will. When we realise this mystery of God's Will, we will rest in peace).

The Sikhs, perhaps, wanted to hear more from the Guru but the above indication had subdued their spirits. They were feeling like fish out of water. Sensing their feelings, the Guru consoled them with the following quotation from *gurbani* :

"ਸੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਸਖਾ ਬੰਧਪੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਵੈ ॥
ਆਪਣੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਜੋ ਚਲੈ ਭਾਈ ਵਿਛੁੜਿ ਚੋਟਾਂ ਖਾਵੈ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 601)

(He is a good Sikh and a true relation who conducts himself in accordance with divine Will. Whoever works in obedience to self moves away from God and suffers).

GURUSHIP ENTRUSTED TO ADI GRANTH

The Sikhs had realised that the Guru was preparing to depart from the world in accordance with God's Will. They came to him and, with folded hands, enquired, "Sahib Ji, to whose care are you leaving us and who will guide the Khalsa Panth in your absence" ? The Guru softly replied, "The Khalsa will be entrusted to Akal Purkh, say "Waheguru".*

The Sikhs again asked, "Who will adorn the *gur-gaddi* and be available for *darshan*" ? That was a very relevant question which had a far-reaching significance for the future of the Khalsa Panth and all those who have faith in Guru Nanak.

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* Dr. Ganda Singh has mentioned this in his book, on the authority of indication given on page 21 of the Granth available in Kabul and published by the S.P.G.C.

The Guru had the Adi Granth brought and opened with due respect, and he asked all Sikhs to assemble in congregation before it. Then he spoke to them as follows :

"Listen, my beloved Khalsa Ji, *gur-gaddi* is always given to a follower. You were all my followers. Out of you, five were those who offered themselves for sacrifice. They died and were reborn. They were still followers. But when after they were administered the baptism of the double-edged sword and I sought the same baptism from them, they assumed the role of Guru Khalsa and I became their follower. They were the five Beloved Ones and whenever five full-fledged Singhs assemble to administer the baptism to other Sikhs, they would represent the Guru in person. This should be an article of faith with you.

"The second point that I want to stress on you is that *bani* (Guru's Word) is Guru and the Guru resides in his Word. This *bani* has been uttered as a divine revelation. Eversince the Adi Granth was compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, he conducted himself according to its teachings by recognising its superior status. So the spiritual gurushipwill rest in Adi Granth. Those who are Amritdhari Singhs and preach the Guru's gospel will comprise the Khalsa Panth. They should not consider themselves to be Gurus. Whoever wants to meet God, should meditate on His Name and search Him through the *shabad*.*

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* This concept of the Guru was later on emphasised by poets like Rattan Singh Bhangu in the following words :

ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੀ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ ।
ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਯੋ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ।
ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨਿਯੋ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ ।
ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੋ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਮੈਂ ਲੇਹ । ("ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼")

(Under instructions of the Timeless Lord, I have started the Khalsa Panth. All Sikhs are ordained to consider the holy scripture as their Guru. Guru Granth should be accepted as the body of Guru. Whoever wants to meet God would find Him in the *shabad*).

This was also the advice given earlier by Guru Harkishan, at the time of his passing away, when the Sikhs enquired from him about the gurushipin future,

Thereafter, the Guru asked five Sikhs (Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Santokh Singh, Bhai Sahib Singh, Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh Anandpuri and Bhai Deep Singh) to stand and then, after saying prayer, went round the Granth five times and offered five paise and a coconut as a token of having passed on the guruship to the holy scripture. The following *shabad* was read out, at random, from the Granth :

"ਅਬਚਲ ਨਗਰੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਤ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਮਨ ਇਛੇ ਸੇਈ ਫਲ ਪਾਏ ਕਰਤੈ ਆਪਿ ਵਸਾਇਆ ਰਾਮ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 783)

This *shabad* was uttered by Guru Arjan Dev at the time of founding the town of Amritsar. It indicates the permanent abode of the enlightener Guru, where, by rememberance of God's Name, happiness is attained and all desires are fulfilled. Sant Atam Das udasi has described this event as an eye witness in his book "Gojh Katha".

The Guru named that place in Nanded as Abchal Nagar and had *langar* prepared and distributed freely to all for three days consecutively. On the following day, after taking the morning bath, the Guru dressed himself in yellow clothes and put on all his arms. He appeared before the Sikhs who had assembled there full of anxiety and consoled them with loving words. He had a sandalwood pyre set up at the place, where Gurdwara Hazur Sahib Abchal Nagar now stands, and canvas walls were fixed up on all sides of the pyre. All the horses in the stables, on which the Guru used to ride, were kept ready with all their trappings on. No body had the courage to enquire from the Guru as to why the horses were being readied in that manner. All stood staring with anxious looks on their faces. But the Guru was in buoyant spirits. Like the general about to receive the highest award of the land or the student going to be rewarded for all the labour he had put in, the Guru's face was brimming with resplendent glory. He looked like an unforgettable centre of concentration to those who had been accustomed to seeing him daily as a holy spirit.

He knew the state of mind of the assembled Sikhs. In order to provide further consolation to them, he spoke as follows :

"Khalsa Ji, you are the worshippers of Timeless God. Only He is deathless. All others are mortals. Even saints and gurus have passed away bodily though not in spirit. You should, therefore, have that feeling in you. Just as the clouds come to quench the thirst of parched lands and then pass away, so do the great men appear in the world to guide the depressed humanity through their teachings and to provide them the needed succour. Those farmers, who do not enclose their fields properly, are unable to take full advantage of the rains. Similarly, those who do not act according to their Guru's teachings, waste their lives. But you have in Guru Granth Sahib an eternal Guru and spiritual guide. Therefore, you should not feel discouraged. Although I may not be with you in body, I will always be by your side in spirit. Have I not said :

"ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੋ ਮੁਖ ਹੈ ਅੰਗਾ ।। ਖਾਲਸੇ ਕੇ ਹੌਂ ਸਦ ਸਦ ਸੰਗਾ ।।"

("ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ")

(The Khalsa is like my mouth and limbs. I am always with the Khalsa).

So always remember and meditate on the fearless God and that will make you fearless. I have given you arms to enable you to protect righteousness and establish your rule. Be sure of that. Also :

ਸਿਖ ਪੰਚਨ ਮਹਿ ਮੇਰੋ ਵਾਸਾ । ਪੂਰਨ ਕਰੂ ਧਰਹਿ ਜੋ ਆਸਾ ।*

(I live with the five Beloved Ones, wherever they may assemble. I fulfil the desires of all those who put their faith and dependence on me).

FINAL ADVICE AND DEPARTURE FROM WORLD

It was the Pancham Sudi Katak day in November 1708 A.D. Like the lotus flower, the Guru's face was in full bloom. He was feeling as happy as the bride about to leave for her in-law's house. He knew that his destined end was nearing and was accordingly preparing himself for it. In the past, as well as in present times, there have been instances in which persons blessed with divine enlightenment have foretold their end and made necessary arrangements

* "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 24).

accordingly. Though all the Sikhs were dismayed, they could not disbelieve the indication given by the Guru that he would depart from the world on that day. Dressed in yellow robes, he first oppeared in the congregation in the morning so that all could behold him and he also might see all of them. During the noon he went to his bed to take rest. When the day was setting, he could see that those assembled outside his room were full of dejection and wore crest-fallen look. He spoke to them as follows :

"Khalsa Ji ! Give up your anxiety and remember the Guru's teachings. Instead of feeling discouraged, take shelter under the benign protection of the Almighty God. Love each other and remain united. With God's Name on your lips, and arms in your hands, you are destined to rule over the land.

"The Mughal rule is nearing its end. They have been responsible for telling lies and resorting to large scale oppression. The cup of their cruelities is full. You recite *gurbani* and hear Sikh history regularly. Continue your practice with arms and do not be afraid of punishing the tyrants.

"Consider five Amritdhari Singhs as representing my form and body. Feed them and you will feed me. All your noble desires will be fullfilled".*

Then the Guru advised that Bhai Mani Singh should leave for Amritsar and look after the management and service in Harmandir Sahib. Similarly, Bhai Deep Singh and Baba Gurbakhsh Singh were entrusted with the management and service at Sabo Ki Talwandi (Dam Dama Sahib)

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* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 24). Eversince the departure of Mata Sahib Devi from Nanded, the Guru had been obtaining five plates of meals for five Singhs (including himself) and then taking his meals. In Hazur Sahib, this practice is still continuing and prayer for *bhog* is offered after dropping a screen in front of the five meals. Elsewhere, in other gurdwaras, the practice of distributing *bhog prashad* among five Singhs or mixing the share of five Singhs with the rest of the *prashad* is symbolic of the practice adopted by the Guru.

and Anandpur Sahib respectively. Only Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Santokh Singh were asked to remain in Hazur Sahib (Abchal Nagar). These instructions were carefully heard and faithfully accepted by all.

Then the Guru heard the whole of *Sodar Path* and had his evening meals. He asked all Sikhs also to take their meals and then reassemble in the congregation. Before the full assembly, the Guru specially asked Bhai Mana Singh Ragi to sing the following *shabad* :

"ਖੁਲਿਆ ਕਰਮ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਭਈ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਗਾਈ ॥
ਸ੍ਰਮ ਥਾਕਾ ਪਾਏ ਬਿਸ੍ਰਾਮਾ ਮਿਟ ਗਈ ਸਗਲੀ ਧਾਈ ॥੧॥
ਅਬ ਮੋਹਿ ਜੀਵਨ ਪਦਵੀ ਪਾਈ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 1000)

(God has opened the door of His mercy. Divine music has been sung. All running about has stopped and restful peace has descended. All worries are over and the eternal abode has been gained).

It was then midnight. The Guru himself recited Jap Ji and the following couplet loudly :

"ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਨੁ ਦੁਈ ਏਕ ਹੈ ਬਿਬ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਕਛੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥
ਜਲ ਤੇ ਉਪਜ ਤਰੰਗ ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਹੀ ਬਿਖੈ ਸਮਾਹਿ ॥"
("ਬਚਿਤ੍ ਨਾਟਕ")

(God and His saints are one; there need be no doubt or further consideration about it. Just as the waves spring from the ocean and again merge into it, so do the saints, after death, become one with God).

Thereafter, the Guru took a small *kirpan* and a bow in his hands and said his prayers. Then fastening his velvety belt and holding the bow and the gun on his shoulders and the small *kirpan* in one of his hands, he loudly greeted every one with "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Sri Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh".

He then went to the stables where his horses were kept ready and saw every one of them. With all the lights round the canvas walls llt up, as if it was Diwali day, the Guru approached the canvas enclosure and paused near the enterance. At that time, the Guru again spoke to the Sikhs present outside as follows :

"As soon as I enter the enclosure, you all have to remain outside and go on chanting *'Satnam Sri Waheguru'*. I will go and sit in meditation on the sandal wood pyre and merge my bodily elements with the five eternal elements. After you see the fire lit up, you go round the enclosure from outside and then depart for your respective homes. Only Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Santokh Singh will remain here and continue the practice of running free kitchen".

On hearing this, Bhai Santokh Singh made the following request :

"Sahib Ji, when all the Sikhs go away from here how will the free kitchen be run" ?

The Guru replied, "Rest assured, whoever will be the officer of this area will act as my storekeeper. You need not feel any anxiety in this regard. This area will also not remain without Sikhs. Many Sikhs will come and settle here. The town will become prosperous."*

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* cf. "Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 24).
Later on, when the Hyderabad State was formed, Nizam Nasrut-Ullah, who had asked for military help from Maharaja Ranjit Singh, attached the estates of five villages to Gurdwara Sach Khand for its maintenance and continuation of free kitchen service. This estate is still in vogue and the five villages are : (1) Bishenpuri (for *langar*), (2) Bansri (for *bhog*), (3) Bari (for *dhoop deep*), (4) Elki and (5) Masaur (for miscellaneous expenditure).

TRAVELOGUE SEVENTEENTH

THE LAST JOURNEY

This is the last of the journeys undertaken by Guru Gobind Singh, depicting his return to the Eternal Abode.

When the Guru entered the enclosure, the Sikhs, along with Mahatma Atam Dass, Balu Hasna, Sant Ishar Dass *udasi* and other Sikhs, also went inside. All were reciting *Satnam Sri Waheguru*. Babu Hasna and the *bairagi* followers of Banda Singh thought that a great saint, an unmatched poet and a fountain of knowledge was disappearing before their eyes. The valiant Sikh soldiers were feeling that their great general was leaving them to attain immortality. But all of them were keeping their emotions subdued. The tears flowing from their eyes, however, expressed what was passing in their minds. The Guru turned to them, greeted them once again with the slogan *Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Sri Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh* and, bowing before them with folded hands, stepped forward and sat on the sandalwood pyre in meditational pose. Soon, his head shivered a little, and then bent forward. A moment later, he expired in the sitting pose.

Those present inside the enclosure realised that the inevitable had happened. Acting on the Guru's instructions they went round the pyre in deep reverance and then came and sat outside the canvas wall, bewildered and shedding tears. Shortly, they saw the flames rising towards the sky.

Some historians have written that the Guru himself set the pyre ablaze with his yogic powers. Although this may look to be an extraordinary thing, but a recent instance of a Nihang Singh of Ganj Dadwara (near Hathras), who produced fire from his own body and burnt himself in that fire, confirms the possibility of such things happening. This

also explains the fact that, after the cremation had taken place completely, only one small *kirpan* (sword) was left at the place. In their view, Guru Gobind Singh, like Guru Nanak, also disappeared bodily from inside the enclosure.

Those sitting outside the high canvas walls could not witness the body actually burning. They could only see flames shooting upwards. They kept chanting ***Satnam Sri Waheguru*** throughout the night. In the morning they went to the river for bathing and after reciting Kirtan Sohila (the night prayer) had *karah prasad* distributed in the customary manner.

Thus, in this unique manner, the Guru's last journey ended on *Katak Sudi Panjvin*, *Samvat* 1765 (October 7, 1708 A.D.)* at Nanded. According to ***gurbani*** :

"ਸੂਰਜ ਕਿਰਣਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਜਲ ਕਾ ਜਲੁ ਹੂਆ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲੀ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਥੀਆ ਰਾਮ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 846)

(Just as the ray merges with the sun and the water with the ocean, so has the soul become one with the super-soul and the human life has ended).

Some non-Sikh writers have described the Guru's sitting voluntarily on the pyre as amounting to suicide, because they think he must have felt disgusted with life. But those who have studied the Guru's philosophy of life and his compositions do not agree with such a view. There have been several instances in Sikh history itself, where, in anticipation of future events, suo-moto actions were taken. Some of these instances are narrated below :

(1) Guru Amar Dass knew about the short span of his son-in-law, Guru Ram Das' life. After warning his daughter Bibi Bhani, about the impending events, Guru Amar Dass transferred the remaining six years of his own life to Guru Ram Das. The latter remained Guru for exactly six years after the death of Guru Amar Das.

(2) Similarly, when Guru Ram Das' end was near, he declared his youngest son, Guru Arjan Dev, as the next Guru and himself went from Amritsar to Goindwal on

* According to Dr. Tarlochan Singh's article on Guru Gobind Singh in the "Spokesman" of Nov. 7, 1983 A.D.)

the same day. There he lived only for one night and passed away on the following day. He was not ill at all, yet he had acted according to pre-determined destiny.

(3) In the same manner, Guru Gobind Singh had, after communion with God, come to know that he was destined to depart from the world on *katak sudi panchmi*. So, he voluntarily made necessary arrangements accordingly and on the intended day went and sat in meditational pose on the pyre. He merged himself with the divine Soul, just as the light merges in the flame and the ray in the run. Thus, there is nothing astounding in the case of holy persons if they act according to God's ordained dispensation.

SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RECORDED

Among those who went to the river for bathing was a stable-keeper who came and told the Sikhs that from among the horses, which were kept ready, a blue horse was missing. This surprised every one and created hope in their minds that the Guru had not died. He had come to see the world's drama and, after doing so, had left bodily. With this hope some of the Sikhs kept vigil round the enclosure and sat outside in meditation.

Some historians have also recorded that on the second day after the cremation, a sadhu came and told the Sikhs in grief that, on his way to Nanded, he met the Guru wearing yellow clothes and riding a blue horse near Ratnagiri temple. He had told him to inform his Sikhs that, although under divine orders, he would no longer be with them in bodily form, he would always remain with them in spirit. They should not, therefore, feel sorrowful but always think of God. This created a ray of hope in the minds of the Sikhs and some of them kept a vigil around the enclosure for some more days.

On the fourth day, after some initial difference of opinion, they went inside the enclosure and cooled the place of cremation with river water, mixed with milk, as it was done in the case of earlier Gurus. On searching the

ashes, they could find only one small *kirpan*. Over the ashes as they lay along with the *kirpan*, they raised a rectangular structure which was covered on top so as not to look like a mausoleum or a grave. They also continued to observe the practice of serving meals to five persons before saying *bhog* prayer.

Among the persons who stayed on in Nanded for some days were Balu Hasna and his group of *udasis*. In their presence, two Maratha Sardars, Rustam Rai and Bala Rai, came to Nanded and offered a bagfull of gold coins, provisions, clothes etc. and spoke to the Sikhs loudly as follows :

"Great is Guru Gobind Singh who has played the drama of his departure from the world in such a manner. But he still extends his protection and help to his devotees. He has very recently rescued us from captivity".

They explained : "We were being kept as prisoners in the fort of Pune for a long time by the Mughal rulers. There was no hope of our release. In the fort there was a Sikh attendent, who on seeing our pitiable condition, advised us to put our faith in the Guru. He prepared the holy pudding and offered prayers on our behalf. After midnight, the Guru, riding on his horse, appeared and awakened us from sleep. He told us that he whom we had invoked in prayer was before us. Soon, our feltters broke. The Guru asked us to hold his stirrups, one on each side, and he flew us across the Vindhya hills to a place nearly fifteen miles away. There he left us and disappeared. But before going, he asked us to go to Nanded to tell you that you should always consider him to be in your midst, though not in bodily form. He has advised you to run free kitchen as before, meditate on God's Name and observe the Guru's discipline. This is what we have come to tell you. Here is some money as a petty offer from us for the free kitchen.*

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*There is a local tradition which confirms that the descendents of these Maratha Sardars continued to come there every year and make their offerings.

These words delighted the Sikhs who were otherwise in a sorrowful mood. The money and provisions offered by the Maratha Sardars was a welcome boon, as after somedays of the Guru's passing away, the free provisions being received from the royal store had been stopped. With the money so received, the customary pudding was prepared and free kitchen restarted.

Thereafter, in accordance with the Guru's instructions, the Sikhs, except those who were specifically told to remain in Nanded, started leaving for the Punjab on foot or no horseback. Some of them went direct to Delhi and informed Mata Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Devi about the Guru having passed away in Nanded. Both the ladies and the Sikhs present there heard the news with great consternation and anguish in their hearts. Their helpless condition, after loss of four sons and their revered husband, can be better imagined than described. Bhai Ram Kuar, a descendent of Baba Buddha and a highly respected Sikh who had remained with Guru Gobind Singh for a long time, consoled the weeping ladies and the *sangat*. He, Balu Hasna and some other Sikhs, who had returned to Delhi, explained in detail to Mata Sundri Ji* and Mata Sahib Devi all that happened in Nanded. Thereafter, the Sikhs departed for their respective homes and Balu Hasna left for Dehra Dun where there is a historic shrine in memory of Ram Rai.

In Nanded, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Santokh Singh, Mahant Ishar Das and his follower, Sant Gopal Das, were looking after the holy place in Abchal Nagar and conducting the service of free kitchen. Bhai Dharam Singh died there after some time and his *samadh* is located in Nanded. Bhai Santokh Singh served for another six years and he too passed away in 1713-14 A.D. Mahant Ishar Dass continued to stay in Nanded upto 1725 A.D., although the local Muslims troubled him a lot and even wounded him in a quarrel. Even then he persisted in service and ultimately expired in 1746 A.D., after entrusting his duties to his follower, Sant Gopal Dass.

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* Mata Sundri Ji remained in Delhi for nearly forty years and died in 1747 A.D.

SOME FURTHER LIGHT ON BAHADUR SHAH'S PART IN THE CONSPIRACY

Dr. Ganda Singh has mentioned in his book* that one month after the passing away of Guru Gobind Singh, Bahadur Shah received a report for decision as to how the Guru's moveable property, which was of appreciable value, should be disposed of. He ordered that he did not need anything out of a *darvesh's* property, which should be returned to his heirs. There is, however, no record, official or non-official, to show as to whom and when that property was returned. He also had a valuable *khilat* (dress of honour) sent to Ajit Singh, the adopted son of Mata Sundri Ji who was residing in Burhanpur. These two actions were considered enough in official circles to absolve the emperor from any responsibility for the Guru's murder, in the eyes of the Sikhs left in Nanded. Otherwise, the emperor had no genuine sympathy with the Guru or his family.

The real intention of the emperor is clear from the official record** kept in Government library in Jaipur in which it is mentioned that, Bahadur Shah also sent another valuable *khilat* to the Gul Khan's heir, through Wazid Khan, the Governor of Sirhind. Had the emperor himself not been involved in the conspiracy, there was no justification in appreciating the services of Gul Khan (also named Jamshed Khan) who was a murderer. It is obvious that by doing so the emperor tried to acknowledge the action of a hero of his faith.

Again, the Guru had, on the emperor's behest, accompanied the latter on a long journey of nearly 1600 K.M. towards the Deccan. But, on hearing about the murderous attack on the Guru, he did not care to come back to Nanded from a short distance of about 10 K.M. but, instead, sent his surgeon. The two courtiers, whom he sent

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* "Sikh Itehas Bare", p. 50-51, written on the authority of "Bahadur Shah Nama".

**"Akhbarat-e-Darbar-e-Mualla". See also Giani Partap Singh's article published in the "Khalsa Samachar" of September 30, 1971.

later on to enquire about the Guru's health, must have also, on their return, told the emperor about the result of stretching the stiff bows. The Guru breathed his last only four days after the departure of those courtiers. But still, the emperor did not show any sympathy by coming to express his condolences. It was the same emperor for whom the Guru fought with Tara Azam and had more than two hundred of his brave warriors killed while fighting on the side of the emperor. Had he any feeling of gratitude in his mind, he should have fulfilled his promise by either surrendering Wazid Khan to the Guru or punishing him himself.

The fact that Gul Khan was caught red-handed with one of the Guru's daggers in his hand, provided an easy alibi for the *maulvis* to create an impression that the Guru himself prompted Gul Khan to take his grandfather's revenge by giving him his own dagger. The Muslim writers had accordingly been advancing this as the cause of the Guru's death and some of those Sikh and non-Sikh writers, who followed them, also dittoed the same theory.* They have failed to understand that Gul Khan could not bring his own dagger for fear of detection by the Sikhs in the Guru's camp. On the other hand, close to the Guru as he was, he knew where the Guru's arms were kept and found it easy to pick up a dagger from among them. Had the Guru given his own dagger to Gul Khan for taking revenge from him, he would not have immediately after he struck the dagger in the Guru's side, got up and in a swift move chopped off the assassin's head with his own sword. How could the Guru, who had tought one of his Sikhs, Bhai Ghanaiya, to provide water as well as render first aid to a wounded enemy, have exhibited reversal of his own teachings by killing his assailant on the spot ? What was the Guru's constraint or compulsion at that time and what was the occasion for the Guru's disillusionment with life, as alleged by such ill-informed and bad-intentioned persons ?

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* cf. "Mehma Prakash" by Sarup Dass Bhalla.
"Gur Bilas" by Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu.
"Sau Sakhis", attributed to Guru Gobind Singh.
"Suraj Prakash" by Bhai Santokh Singh.

There, however, seems to be some truth in the plea that during the course of his preachings, the Guru must have said something against the code of Muslim law and practices which the *maulvis* did not like and for which they must have obtained the emperor's permission to do away with the Guru through a pre-planned conspiracy. It was virtually the same type of *fatwa* as passed against Guru Arjan Dev with the connivance of emperor Jehangir and against Guru Tegh Bahadur under orders of emperor Aurangzeb. It is natural that such conspiracies take time to be revealed or exposed. This happened in the case of Maharaja Kharak Singh, who was, underinstigation, imprisoned by his own son, Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, and declared to have died of ailment, and later on of Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh himself over whom the balcony of a porch was caused to be thrown by the court conspirators, resulting in his death. It was 58 years later when the book "Memories of Col. Alexander Gardner" was published in 1898 A.D. that those conspiracies came to light*. No wonder, if Guru Gobind Singh too became target of a conspiracy due to his bold criticism of the meaningless rituals of both the Muslims and the Hindus.

Even in modern times we know that Pandit Lekh Ram, an Arya Samajist, gave sharp replies to the *maulvis* who had criticised the Hindu religion and its customs. The *maulvis* could not tolerate retaliatory criticism of their prophet. They deputed a young muslim to pose as a covert to Hinduism and, after winning the confidence of Pandit Lekh Ram, he look the earliest opportunity to kill him. That job the young Muslim accomplished on March 6, 1897 A.D by stabbing the Pandit with a dagger, in the same manner as Gul Khan attacked Guru Gobind Singh in Nanded.** Similar recent events relating to Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Shyama Prasad Mukherji of India, President Kennedy of America and Liaqat Ali Khan of Pakistan are too well known to be discussed in detail here.

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*"Suraj Prakash" (Ain 2, Ansu 29) and Bhai Vir Singh's comments thereon

**See the "Partap" newspaper of March 9, 1968 for its editorial on this subject.

Discernable readers will now appreciate that the conspiracy originaliy hatched by Governor Wazid Khan of Sirhind was later on executed by the fanatic *maulvis* in Nanded with the tacit approval of Bahadur Shah. The simple-minded Sikhs left in Nanded came to believe the official propaganda that the Guru himself gave his dagger to Gul Khan for taking revenge.

It is rightly said that God's retribution is inevitable though it may be delayed. No wonder if such an ungrateful person like Bahadur Shah was not able to rule for long and he died in a state of madness on February 26, 1712 A D. just about three years after the passing away of Guru Gobind Singh.

SOME DOUBTFUL POINTS ANSWERED

First Point : As recorded by Sikh historians and also written in this book, the Guru himself went and sat in *samadhi* on the pyre. Did he breathe his last so soon, or was it a case of suicide ?

It is an accepted doctrine of the Vedas and also the view of all enlightened souls that space, time and subject combine, according to God's dispensation, at the time of death. This is illustrated by the following examples :

(1) Mahatma Gandhi had once mentioned during his life time that he would live up to 100 or 125 years. But he died much earlier by shots fired by Godse while he was addressing an evening prayer meeting in Birla House in New Delhi. No body, except God, was aware of such a happening, nor did God reveal it to any one, otherwise all-out efforts would have been made by official as well as non-official agencies to protect and save him.

(2) The First Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, was destined to die of heart failure on May 27, 1964 A.D. in his Tin Murti House in New Delhi, after the debacle in Chinese War. Similarly, his successor Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri's end had to come in Tashkent (Russia) after signing ceasefire agreement of the India-Pakistan War in 1965 A.D. They were unaware of the combination of space, time and subject when their deaths were to occur.

(3) On the other hand, those prophets and saints who are God-oriented and who conduct themselves in the world in accordance with God's Will, become aware of their end earlier or soon before it and make their preparations for departure from the world accordingly. Shri Krishna, after killing Kansa and performing numerous miraculous deeds in Mathura and Brindaban and then going to Dawarka to rule, had ultimately to retire to a jungle where he was struck unknowingly by a mortal arrow shot by a hunter. It was in the jungle that space and time had to combine to bring about the end of his worldly sojourn.

(4) Guru Nanak, after his long travels, had settled down in Kartarpur on the bank of the river Ravi. He had engaged himself in agricultural and missionary activities there and was quite hale and hearty. One of his attendants, named Kamla, who had gone out for collecting grass for the cattle, came back and told the Guru about his meeting with three yogis who gave him a bit of ashes. The Guru realised that it was a call back for him. He accordingly announced the date and time of his departure, and, after bowing before Guru Angad and entrusting the *Pothi* (Book of Hymns) to him, entered into *samadhi* and was no more. This happened on Monday, September 22, 1539 A D. (Asu Sudi 10, Samvat 1596)*. According to the devout chronicler, there arose a quarrel between Hindu and Muslim devotees of the Guru but when they, under the advice of some wise men of both the communities, lifted the cotton sheet from the body, they could find "only flowers and silence". The cotton sheet was divided into two equal halves, the Hindus consigning their share to fire and the Muslims burying theirs.

(5) In the same manner. Guru Gobind Singh had, through solitary communion with God, sought to know His will.

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* "A History of the Sikh People" by Dr. Gopal Singh, p. 132. In "Puratan Janam Sakhi", the date of Guru Nanak's demise is mentioned as Asu Sudi 10, Samvat 1595 (1538 A.D.).

Having done so, he told the date and time of his departure from the world to the Sikhs. At the destined time, he went inside the enclosure and entered into *samadhi* after giving necessary instructions to the Sikhs. He breathed his last in sitting pose like a true yogi and a valiant hero. After living, preaching and fighting the enemies in the Punjab, it was in the Deccan at Nanded that he was destined to pass the last moments of his worldly life.

Second Point : How was it that when ashes were searched on the fourth day of the cremation, only one small *kirpan* was found ? No other arms or any bone could be located. A horse was also reported to have disappeared from the stable. Was it all a mystery or a political move ?

In order to understand the reality of this point, it has to be admitted that like the first Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh was also a born prophet. Both had the same *jot* (divinity) in them. Guru Nanak, in his childhood, had made the grazen crops green again and the cobra's hood provided shade on his face, when he was asleep under a tree in the field. Similarly, Guru Gobind Singh, as a small child, removed doubts from the mind of Bhikhan Shah who came to see him in Patna, appeared before Pandit Shiv Dutt in the form of Sri Ram Chander and served as a guard to save Bhai Joga Singh from falling in sin. He could have, if he wanted, escaped from the observation of Bahadur Shah in Nanded, just as he had successfully escaped from Chamkaur and Machhiwara. But God did not want him to remain in bodily form any more. The formality of cremation had, therefore, to be gone through, otherwise the Sikhs would have always remained in search of him. This explains the obsence of bones or any other arms in the ashes.

The despatch of a sadhu to inform the Sikhs that he had seen the Guru riding on a horse was obviously intended to provide consolation and encouragement to them so that they might not feel dejected and forlorn but continue to conduct the community kitchen and propagate the Sikh faith in that part of the country. Just as Vishnu rode the

gararh (bird with upper half of a man), Brahma, th *hans* (swan) and Shiva, the *nandi* (bullock), so did Guru Gobind Singh prefer to ride the horse. No wonder, therefore, if he, at the time of departing from Nanded, left along with his chosen horse and selected arms. It is not necessary that he should have revealed everything for the satisfaction of his followers. Such things in the realm of divinity have to remain a mystery.

Third Point : How can it be believed that even after the Guru breathed his last, the fire did not burn his body, particularly when the flames rose high and the whole surrounding was illuminated ? No body had seen the body rising and disappearing in the sky.

If God saved Bhagat Prahlad from burning fire and hot iron pillar, but at the same time let his faithless aunt (father's sister), Holka, to be consumed in it; if Hazrat Ibrahim could see flowers in place of flaming sparks, then it was not difficult for Him to save His proclaimed son, Guru Gobind Singh, from the effect of fire. The same God protects the child form fire in the mother's womb. In fact He controls all the elements and His omnipotence is capable of doing things which may appear impossible to us. It is on account of such powers that the *bhagats* have complete faith in the Almighty God. It was the yogic power of Guru Gobind Singh from which fire emanated automatically and showed to those sitting outside as if the pyre was lit up.

Fourth Point : The sadhu's version that on the day after the cremation (or disappearance) he had seen the Guru, clad in yellow dress and riding a horse, near the temple of Ratnagiri, is difficult to believe. It is equally difficult to take the version of the two Maratha Sardars that they were freed by the Guru from the fort of Pune and flown over the Vindhya hills by holding the stirrups of his horse as correct.

In this connection, it has to be realised that although saints and prophets have the same bodily form as that of ordinary men of the world, their spiritual insight and power to fathom the unknown is vastly superior. They have to guide the people and set them on the right path. They hear the prayers of their devotees from a distance, just as we

learn of wireless messages over the broadcasting system. In Dwarka, Shri Krishna heard the prayers of Draupadi at a distance of over a thousand miles from Delhi. Guru Nanak returned from far off countries in response to his devoted sister, Bebe Nanaki's, fervent calls. He saved his colleague, Mardana, from the burning cauldron of Kauda, the gaint. Guru Gobind Singh also stopped Bhai Joga Singh from falling in sin at a prostitute's house and guided him on the right path. This feat he was able to accomplish by riding forty miles on either side over the hills and obstructing the mistaken path of Joga Singh, in disguise. Similarly, he fulfilled the desire of Pandit Shiv Dutt sitting in meditation on the river bank in Patna by appearing before him as Shri Ram Chander. These are not fake stories but are historical facts. It is, therefore, not appropriate to assess the works of saints and prophets with the yardstick for ordinary men of the world.

Who opened the doors of Kansa's jail at the time of Shri Krishna's birth and who broke the chains of his parents ? Who held the Jamuna's waters and enabled the child Krishna to be carried across to Nanda's house and bring back the latter's new-born daughter to be confined in jail ? All these astonishing events were spectacles of Shri Krishna's divinity in childhood. Such great souls, even after disappearance from the world, hear and answer the prayers of their devotees and, even in times of emergency, appear before them in bodily form.

Hindu Sanatan and Vedic scriptures, the Koran, the Bible as well as the Adi Granth, all admit the existence of evil spirits who torture their dead or living captives in visible or invisible forms. If that is so, there is all the more reason to believe that holy spirits and spirits of martyrs are also active and are capable of appearing before those who remember them with faith, in human or etherial forms. No wonder, therefore, if Guru Gobind Singh had met the sadhu and the Maratha Sardars in visible form and sent them to Nanded to console the bemoaning Sikhs. The Guru, as the Sikh prayer says, extends his protection to the Khalsa at all places, wherever his help is sought and prayed for. Further, it will not be out of place to mention that the sadhu had

not seen the Guru and the dress he used to wear before. The indications about his riding a horse and the yellow colour of his dress are reliable proofs of the sadhu having met the Guru. Consequently, it has to be agreed that the Guru, after enacting the final drama of cremation, must have assumed ethereal form and left Nanded without leaving any sign which could prompt the Sikhs to waste their energies in tracing him.

The story of the Maratha Sardars also cannot be dismissed as incorrect. If, with Shri Ram Chander's blessings, Hanuman could lift the mountain and fly with it all the way from the Himalayas to Sri Lanka, Guru Gobind Singh, with his divine powers, could also fulfil the sincere desire and prayer of the Maratha Sardars and, after managing their release from the fort, fly them to another place across the Vinhyas. It is a matter of common knowledge that with the touch of magnets, heavy iron sheets and girders are lifted and carried away in Tatanagar Steel Factory. Likewise, the saintly persons can make use of divine powers and bring impossible things within the scope of possibility.

There is a recent example of the author's old friend, Sardar Partap Singh Chadha, who was President of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Daryaganj, Delhi and also general manager of Messrs. R.K. Hari Chand Kapur & Sons, belonging to Rai Sahib Radha Krishan Kapur. One of the several branches of that firm was in Mhow Cantonment. The Rai Sahib, who was very fond of hearing Sukhmani Sahib from Sardar Partap Singh during their morning walk everyday, died in his house in Daryaganj in 1955. But the manager of Mhow Cantt Office reported later on that the Rai Sahib had come to inspect that branch nearly two years after his death. Sardar Partap Singh also recalled another instance of this type of happening. After the demise of the Rai Sahib, he and a headmaster friend used to go out for a walk in early hours of the morning every day and, by the time they returned, they used to finish recitation of Sukhmani Sahib. One day, while returning, they were accosted by the Rai Sahib, dressed in a suit, with turban on the head and a stick in hand. He told them that he had not heard Sukhmani Sahib from them for a long time. Then,

after walking along with them for 20-25 yards, he disappeared, saying "My time is over, I must go". It transpired later on that the headmaster was unable to see the Rai Sahib walking in their company. This also shows that God-oriented persons with pure minds can, if they like, show themselves in human form.

Still another instance was cited by Sardar Partap Singh. He had gone to Hazur Sahib in Nanded, along with a friend. While going to sleep at night, he expressed a desire to get up at 1.30 A.M. to be able to go inside the holy shrine before 3 A.M. Right at 1.30 A.M., some one struck the foot of his bed with a stick or an arrow thrice and told him, "Wake up, it is 1.30 in the morning". By the time he got up, the holy figure had disappeared but left him full of joy. Again, when he went to the shrine at 3 A.M. and sat on the backside, he had a glimpse of Guru Gobind Singh again. Unable to stand the Guru's glory, he remained unconscious for a long time. No doubt, it is the lucky people who are able to have such glimpses but the fact remains that saintly souls do fulfil the wishes of their devotees.

Fifth Point : Some people think that the Guru had told the Sikhs that no *samadhi* (mausoleum) should be built over the place of his cremation and that whosoever did so would meet with destruction of his family. That is why, when Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a mausoleum constructed over the place, disaster overtook his family. What was the correct position ?

It is doubtful whether the Guru had given any such instructions. He himself had raised a *samadhi* over the place where the severed head of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, was cremated near Anandpur. When he left Anandpur, he entrusted the duty of maintaining that *samadhi* to Bhai Gurbakhsh, a local Sikh. Again, when he came to Delhi, he specially went to Sis Ganj* and Rakab Ganj** on pilgrimage and gave good amount of money to

*The place in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, where Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded under orders of emperor Aurangzeb in 1675 A.D.

**The place where Guru Tegh Bahadur's severed body was cremated near secretariat buildings in New Delhi.

the Delhi *sangat* to build gurdwaras there.

If he had prohibited construction of a memorial in Nanded, there was no need to continue community kitchen there, as specifically desired by the Guru. Such an arrangement was necessary only because *samadhi* was built there and the Sikhs coming to pay homage to the place had to be served with meals. That *samadhi* had actually been built much earlier than Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The Guru had passed away in 1708 A.D. and Maharaja Ranjit Singh became the ruler of the Punjab nearly 92 years afterwards. At first his attention was concentrated on gilding the Hari Mandir in Amritsar. It was only towards 1839 A.D. when he fell ill that he sent Sardar Chanda Singh to Nanded to carry out repairs and build a *pucca* mausoleum over the place of the Guru's cremation. It was on Sunday, Chet Vadi Dasvin in 1839 A.D. that the foundation stone of the outside construction was laid.*

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*This is recorded on the backside of an old book, named "Hanuman Natak" available in the Dera of Baba Nidhan Singh in Nanded. It is, perhaps, the same book of that name which the Guru had picked up from Bahadur Shah's Toshakhana (Treasury-cum-Museum) in Agra and which he must have brought to Nanded along with him. Extracts taken from it and published by the S.G.P.C. in Gurdwara Gazette of November, 1965 are as follows :

"In Samvat 1896 Phalgan Vadi Panchmi, Sunday (1839 A.D.) the first clod of earth was turned. Then on Chet Vadi Dasvin, Sunday, nearly four hours before sunset, the outer foundation stone was laid. Then fifty hands long, forty hands wide, twenty two hands deep and four hands broad foundation of Darbar Sahib was laid on Chet Sudi Chaudhvin, Wednesday. Thereafter, twenty five hands deep, on a stone, the foundation of Sri Abchal Nagar, Hazur Sahib, was laid, seventeen and a half hands long and five and a half hands wide.

"The 'Manji Sahib' inside was not disturbed.

"At that time in 1839 A.D., Jassa Singh was the priest inside. Gahu Singh was on the steps outside, waving the fly-whisk. (*continued on next page*)

Three months after that the Maharaja died. Apparently, the covered *samadhi* was originally built 80-82 years before, and since then, after the expiry of Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Santokh Singh, Sant Ishar Das udasi and then Mahant Gopal Das and Mahant Gursharan Das looked after the shrine.* How could these devotees of the Guru have allowed the *samadhi* to remain uncovered and exposed to sun, rain and the mischief of stray birds, for so long. It was on account of increasing number of pilgrims that the Nizam Government had to send away Mahant Gursharan Das to Hingoli after granting him an estate of twenty thousand rupees.

In reality, Sant Ishar Dass had persuaded Bhai Mela Singh Ramgarhia first to build a covered *samadhi*. Then Bhai Charat Singh of Kartarpur came and donated one thousand rupees for expanding the *samadhi*. Later on, a devotee of the Guru, named Bhai Gahu Singh, spent fifty thousand rupees on the improvement of the building and construction of a deep *baoli* (step-well). It was much afterwards that Maharaja Ranjit Singh had suitable shape given to the mausoleum, befitting the memory of the great Guru. With the lapse of time, people forgot the names of earlier donors and remembered the name of the Maharaja only, and connected the effacement of his dynasty with a possible curse that might have been given by the Guru.

A pertinent point arises that if the Guru had not utterred such a curse, then how did that story gain

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(*contd. from previous page*)

"Raja Ranjit Singh was the Guru's Singh. He sent money and also sent Chanda Singh, who was also a Sikh of the Guru. Construction, with full physical and mental devotion, was started on Samvat 1896, Phalgan Vadi Panchmi, Sunday.

"Dewan Chandu Lal (minister in Hyderabad Government) assigned the estate of seven villages. Two of these were specifically for the customary *bhog* of five dishes, which practice had been started by the Guru and was continued thereafter.

* cf. "Panth Prakash" by Giani Gian Singh, p. 288.

currency? It seems that when Maharaja Ranjit Singh thought of rebuilding this important shrine in the Deccan in memory of the great saint-warrior, Guru Gobind Singh, the British Government of the day must have warned the ruler of Hyderabad* against the danger of setting up another Sikh centre in the south, as had been done at Amritsar in the north.

The Hyderabad State in the Deccan was ruled by Asif Jahi dynasty. Its third ruler, Sikandar Jah, had appointed, as his minister, Dewan Chandu Lal, who belonged to the family of Dewan Todar Mal, a Malhotra Khatri of the Punjab. This was not liked by the Muslim army officers who were mostly Rohillas and Arabs. When they openly became indifferent and revolted, Sikandar Jah, under advice of Dewan Chandu Lal, sent a valuable canopy and other precious gifts to Maharaja Ranjit Singh and asked for military help from him. The Maharaja sent twelve to fourteen thousand Sikh soldiers who brought about peace in the area in barely a year's time. The Sikh army remained in the south for nearly three years during which period the Maharaja arranged to send his soldiers' salaries to their homes so that their families might not suffer any inconvenience. After three years, an agreement was signed between the Nizam and the Maharaja to the effect that those Sikh soldiers who wanted to return to the Punjab were allowed to go; others who desired to settle in the south were retained in the Hyderabad army on the condition that the eldest son of their male offspring would continue in service and be absorbed in the same rank as theirs. This arrangement was confirmed to the author by the Sikh army officers, when he went to Hazur Sahib, along with sant Teja Singh, M.A., in 1934. Having seen the bravery of Sikh soldiers, the Asif Jahi rulers become afraid of another strong Sikh centre being built in the south. They misled the official supervisor and the local priests by telling them that if the Maharaja's nominees came to manage the shrine, they would lose their control and source of income. It was

* In those days, Nanded was part of the Nizam's State of Hyderabad. At the time of Reorganisation of States, it was included in Maharashtra—Tr.

in this context that they agreed to concoct the story that the Guru hand cursed that anyone raising a mausoleum at the place of his cremation would face effacement of his family. But Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a devoted Sikh and a man of his words. Inspite of the reported curse, he had the project carried through. Needless to add that the Maharaja retained his buoyant spirits right till his end. No one could dare disobey him. It was only due to the inefficiency of his successors, the court intrigues of the Dogra ministers and the insincerity of the British East India Company that the Sikh empire was lost. There are, however, still some descendents of the Maharaja living in the Punjab and elsewhere.

Apart from Maharaja Ranjit Singh, many other Sardars and Sikh States have contributed liberally to the development of Sri Hazur Sahib (Abchal Nagar). If it were a case of curse, others also should have suffered. But this was not the case. On the other hand, names of several rajas and emperors have gone into oblivion but the name of Maharaja Ranjit Singh has become immortal on account of its association with the holy shrine of Sri Hazur Sahib.

LOCATION OF HISTORICAL ARMS OF THE GURU

Takht Patna Sahib

One cradle, four arrows, one small sword, one small double-edged sword and one dagger.

Lakhnaur Sahib

One small portable bed, one small pair of shoes and one or two other things.

Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur

One *nagni* (spear) 8 ft. and 9 inches long, one *barcha* (javelin), one *saif* (sword) weighing 1600 grams, one double-edged sword, one dagger on which pictures of elephants and lions are inscribed.

Nahan

One sword on which the date Baisakh 17, Samvat 1742 are inscribed.

Sri Akal Takht

One sword, two arrows bearing 10 grams of gold on their tips, two daggers (of Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh).

Takht Sri Hazur Sahib (Nanded)

One Circle (discus), one broad and heavy *teg* (sword), one steel bow, one club, one all-steel arrow, one golden sword, one golden *kirpan* (of the same type as found in the ashes).

Nabha

One three and a half inch long *karad* (dagger) tucked with the turban, one sword which was bestowed to Bhai Trilok Singh at the time of baptising him at Damdama Sahib. On one side of this is written *Sri Bhagauti Ji Sahai, Guru Gobind Singh, Patshahi 10.* One other sword, which was brought by Maharaja Hira Singh to Nabha, and which was used in the waistband by the Guru. On its handle, the following words are written :

"May Guru Nanak protect all Sikhs". (Translated)

Patiala (In the tower of Baba Ala Singh).

One sword in Shikar Ghar on which there are pictures of hunting.

One sword on which are written the following words :

"Akal Sahai, Guru Gobind Singh, whoever sees will be blessed". (Translated).

One two-dhaka arrow, having three golden *bandhs* on it.

One unique lance with handle.

One hatchet.

One golden dagger.

One double-edged sword which Bhai Sahib Arjan Singh, Chief of Bagrian, had given to Maharaja Ala Singh.

Jind (in Sangrur)

One sword on which it is written in golden words :

"This sword is of the waistband of Guru Gobind Singh". (Translated).

It was obtained from one Mohammed Yar in Surat Bunder.

Guru Gobind Singh had given it to Bhai Dharam Singh. It was passed on by Bhai Gudar Singh (ancestor of Bhai Sahib of Bagrian) to Raja Gajpat Singh of Jind when he was baptised by the former.

One *pesh-kabz* on which Samvat 1752 is inscribed; the following inscription in Persian also appears thereon :

"Sikka Zad Bar Har Do Alam Va Fazal Sakhi,

Shah Guru Gobind Singh Khud Saha Jahan Teg Panah".

(Note : This sword was bestowed by Guru Gobind Singh to Bhai Trilok Singh).

Faridkot

One sword and one shield which the Guru had bestowed upon Chaudhri Kapur Singh of Kot Kapura.

Sabo Ki Talwandi (Takht Sri Damdama Sahib)

One sword which was given by the Guru to Sardar Dalla and is now available in the house of Sardar Shamsher Singh.

Additional arms brought from London

One iron *daoo* which was given to Maharaja Ranjit Singh by a hillman who might have got it during the Guru's stay in Paonta.

One spear which the Sikhs had brought from Abchal Nagar and had given to Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

One All-steel discus which was available with an Akali Singh and which he had offered to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Attock.

One sword which the Maharaja had received from a person, named Bharti, in 1821 A.D. and which he had kept in his *Toshakhana*.

Note : These arms of Guru Gobind Singh had been sent by the Government on December 23, 1851 A.D. to London, to be kept there in the royal storeroom. Thirty one armymen (1 Jamadar, 2 Havildars, 2 Naiks and 26 Soldiers) were deputed on secret duty to accompany these through the Punjab territory upto Ambala.
(Gurdwara Record, No. 19-21-4, October, 1851 A.D.)

On arrival from London by air, these arms were

received with great respect by the then Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Sardar Ujjal Singh (Governor of Punjab), Shri Jha (Lt. Governor of Delhi), ministers and other members of Parliament, besides the general public. Contigents of the army also saluted the arms which were displayed on a wagon. The Delhi Gurdwara Management Committee had a film prepared of the arrival of the arms and the procession in which they were carried through the city of Delhi. Later on, the arms were taken to Amritsar and then to Sri Hazur Sahib (Nanded) on December 4, 1965. Wherever the arms were taken, they were received and worshipped with great respect and faithful devotion. This was done because Guru Gobind Singh considered arms to be the instruments of all energy which enables the tyrants and the wicked to be destroyed and the holy persons to be protected.

In "Krishnavtar" (Dasam Granth), Guru Gobind Singh, has summed up his last ambition in the following Swaiyya :

"ਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ ਕੋ ਪੂਤ ਹੌਂ, ਬਾਮ੍ਹਨ ਕੋ ਨਹਿ, ਕੈ ਤਪੁ ਆਵਤ ਹੈ ਜੁ ਕਰੌਂ ।
ਅਰੁ ਅਉਰ ਜੰਜਾਰ ਜਿਤੋ ਗ੍ਰਹ ਕੋ, ਤੁਹਿ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕਹਾ ਚਿਤ ਤਾ ਮੈਂ ਧਰੌਂ ।
ਅਬ ਰੀਝ ਕੈ ਦੇਹੁ ਵਹੈ ਹਮ ਕੋ, ਜੋਊ ਹਉਂ ਬਿਨਤੀ ਕਰ ਜੋਰਿ ਕਰੌਂ ।
ਜਬ ਆਉ ਕੀ ਅਉਧਿ ਨਿਦਾਨ ਬਨੈ, ਅਤਿ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੂਝਿ ਮਰੌਂ ।"

(I am the son of a Kshatri (Guru Tegh Bahadur) who sacrificed himself for the cause of *dharma* and national honour and not a *brahmin*. I do not know *tapas* (penances) which I might perform. Should I forget you, O Lord, and indulge in worldly affairs ? Now, please grant me the boon which I actually seek of you with folded hands. And that boon is that when my span of life ends, I should die fighting on the battle field).

This ambition should also serve as a guide for all Sikhs to adopt the discipline prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh, take baptism of the double-edged sword, be proud of being *keshadhari* Khalsa, remain always in buoyant spirits, with *gurbani* as their sheet-anchor and be everready to sacrifice themselves, if and when necessary, for the cause of right-eousness, justice and national honour.

LAST WILL OF EMPEROR AURANGZEB

(See page 201)

(This Will was recorded by Maulvi Hamid-ud Din, in Chapter 8 (page 183) of his hand-written Persian book concerning the life of emperor Aurangzeb. He has described how, at the time of the emperor's death, he had the occasion to go near his deathbed and pick up the papers from under his pillow. It is on the basis of the wishes expressed in those papers that Maulvi Hamid-ud Din compiled the following Will) :

Will No. 1

There is no doubt that I have been the emperor of India and I have ruled over this country. But I am sorry to say that during my lifetime, I have not been able to do any good deed. My inner soul is cursing me as a sinner. But now it is of no avail.

It is my last wish that my funeral rites should be performed by my dear son, Azam. No body else should touch my body.

Will No. 2

(a) My servant, Aya Beg, has my purse in which I have carefully kept four rupees and two annas of my earning. You know in my spare time I have been either stitching caps or writing the Koran. It was by selling those caps that I made an honest earning of four rupees and two annas. My coffin should be purchased with that amount. No other money should be spent for covering the dead body of this sinner. This is my dying wish.

(b) By selling copies of the Koran which I wrote, I collected three hundred and five rupees. That money is also

with my servant, Aya Beg. It is my Will that poor mohammedans should be fed with sweet rice purchased and cooked with that money which should be spent on the same day when I die.

Will No. 3

All my articles—clothes, inkstand, pens, books or whatever I possess—should be given to my son, Azam. After my death, all my rights will devolve on him. The labour charges for digging my grave will be paid by Prince Azam. The labourers engaged for that purpose must be paid their wages.

Will No. 4

My grave should be dug in a dense forest. When I am buried, my face should remain uncovered. Do not bury my face in earth. I want to present myself in Allah's Court with naked face. I am told that whoever goes to that Supreme Court with naked face has all his sins forgiven by God.

Will No. 5

My coffin should be of thick white khaddar. Do not place any costly shawl on my corpse. The route along which my funeral passes should not be laid with any durree and no flowers should be showered over it. No one should be permitted to place any flower over my body. No music or song should be sung on that occasion. I am dead against songs and I hate music.

Will No. 6

No tomb should be built for me. If considered necessary for the purpose of retaining some sign or mark, only a *chabootra* or platform may be erected at the place of my burial. (According to this wish of the emperor, his grave made of *kuccha* bricks can still be seen in Aurangabad).

Will No. 7

I remember that I have not been able to pay the salaries of most of my soldiers, particularly my personal servants, for the last several months. I could not do so as the royal

treasury was empty. But I bequeath that, after my death, at least my personal servants should be paid off fully. *Niamat Ali has been serving me very faithfully. Whenever I got besmirched and stinked with filth, it was poor Niamat Ali who used to clean my body. He never allowed my bed to remain dirty.* (This confirms the foul disease from which the emperor suffered when he died).

Will No. 8

No mausoleum should be raised in my memory, nor should my *urs* be celebrated. No stone with my name inscribed on it should be put up on my grave. There should be no tree planted on or near my grave. A sinner like me does not deserve to enjoy the protection of a shady tree.

Will No. 9

My son, Azam, has the authority to rule from the throne at Delhi. Kam Bakhsh should be entrusted with the governance of Bijapur and Golconda States. If he desires, he may be given more territory out of the Deccan area.

Will No. 10

God should not make anyone an emperor. In my opinion, the most unfortunate person in the world is the one who is an emperor. I wish to record it as a part of my Will that my sons should not put their belief in any one. The Marathas are my enemies. In trying to finish them, I am myself finished. The Mughal rule has ended. My sins should never be mentioned in any social gathering. No story from my life should be told to any one.

(Translated from an historical article published by Sardar Ajmer Singh, M.A. in the "Fateh" Weekly on November 7, 1976).

GLOSSARY OF WORDS IN COMMON USE

ADI GRANTH—The Sikh holy seripture, containing hymns of Sikh Gurus, Hindu Bhagats and Muslim Sufi Saints, compiled by Guru Arjan Dev in 1604 A.D.

AKAL TAKHT SAHIB—The Guru's seat of temporal authority in the precincts of Golden Temple, Amritsar, named after the Timeless Lord.

AKHAND PATH—A continuous reading of the Adi Guru Granth Sahib which takes 48 hours to complete.

AMRIT —Nectar, prepared with double-edged sword and simultaneous recitation of Gurbani, for initiation of Sikhs to Khalsa Brotherhood.

AMRIT PRACHAR—The entire ceremony of initiation.

ANAND KARAJ—Wedding ceremony according to Sikh rites, performed before and around the holy scripture.

ANAND SAHIB—Song of Bliss–a poetical composition of 40 stanzas by Guru Amar Das, the third Sikh Guru. The first four stanzas and the 40th Stanza are read at conclusion of all ceremonies.

AARTI —Prayer ceremony depicting the worship of the Lord Creator by His entire creation. (The brahmins perform it with lighted candles).

ARDAS —The closing prayer after each ceremony. The Sikh congregational prayer.

ASA-DI-VAR—A ballad of 24 hymns, sung with music, in the morning in every Sikh temple.

BAISAKHI—First day of the month of Baisakh, which is the second month of the Indian calendar, and the birthday of the Khalsa Brotherhood.

BANDAI SIKHS—Those who followed Banda Singh Bahadur, who was commissioned by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708 A.D. to lead the military struggle against tyrannical Mughal rulers in the Punjab.

BHOG —Conclusion of a congregational ceremony.

CHHOTA GHALUGHARA—The small holocaust which occurred near Kanuwan Chambh in May 1746 A.D. An estimated ten to twelve thousand Sikhs were massacred in this holocaust.

DAL —Troop of armed men. A team or party.

DASWANDH—One-tenth of income donated by Sikhs for charitable purposes.

DHADI —A panegyrist who sings praises of Gurus and eulogies of Sikh warriors, on a small tambourine.

DHARAM—Religion, faith, belief, creed, righteousness. Hence, dharmik i.e. pertaining to religion.

DIWAN —A Sikh religious assembly.

EK OANKAR—One Supreme and Indivisible God, the beginning of the Mool Mantra.

FIVE K's—*Kes* (long hair), *Kangha* (comb), *Kirpan* (small sword), *Kara* (steel bracelet) and *Kachehra* (short underpants). These are five essential aids to discipline, to be observed by all members of the Khalsa Brotherhood.

FOUR KURAHATS—Four essential acts to be avoided by all members of Khalsa Brotherhood, viz. desecration of hair, use (even touching) of tobacoo, commission of adultery and eating of koshar meat.

FOUR SAHIBZADAS—The four sons (princes) of Guru Gobind Singh, namely, Sahibzadas Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh. The first two died fighting in the battle of Chamkaur and the other two were bricked up

alive in Sirhind, under orders of the Mughal Governor.

GIANI —One who has gained knowledge or wisdom; Honours Degree in Punjabi language. Also referred to one who performs the duties of a priest in a Sikh temple.

GRANTH—A large religious book; hence Granthi—one who reads the Granth.

GURBANI—Devotional literature authored by the Sikh Gurus, Hindus bhagats and Sufi saints and incorporated in the Sikh scriptures.

GURDWARA—Sikh temple, the house of the Guru.

GURMANTRA—'*Waheguru*' the first incantation enjoined upon Sikhs by the Guru at the time of initiation.

GURMATTA—Resolution passed unanimously or by consensus among Sikhs before the holy Granth.

GURMUKHI—The script evolved by Guru Nanak and developed by Guru Angad Dev for writing the Sikh scriptures and Punjabi language.

GURU —Religious teacher. In Sikhism restricted to the ten Sikh Gurus and Guru Granth Sahib.

GURPURBS—Holy days of the Sikhs.

HOLA MAHALLA—The Sikh festival held one day after the Holi festival of the Hindus in the month of March. On this occasion, instead of playing with coloured powder or liquid, the Sikhs hold strenuous exercises and sport events.

HUKAMNAMA—Edict issued from Akal Takht—the supreme seat of temporal authority of the Sikhs in Amritsar. It is obligatory on the part of all Sikhs to follow it.

JANAMSAKHI—Book containing life stories of Guru Nanak.

JANEU —Sacred thread worn by high caste Hindus.

JAPJI —The composition of Guru Nanak, recited in the morning. The Adi Granth starts with this composition.

KHALSA—All Sikhs who have been initiated with the baptism of double-edged sword.

KHANDA-CHAKRA-KIRPANS–A double-edged *Khanda*, a steel discus and two swords. An arrangement of these weapons forms the 'Coat of Arms' of the Khalsa Brotherhood.

KARAH PRASHAD—Sweet pudding, made from ghi, maida and sugar and distributed in Sikh congregations after the Bhog ceremony.

LANGAR (GURU KA)—Community kitchen (of the Guru) attached to the Gurdwara. Here free meals are served to all, irrespective of their caste, creed or colour.

MAHANT—Keeper of the temple. The mahant system was ended following the Gurdwara Reform Movement (1920-1925).

MAJHA—Present-day Northern Punjab, comprising the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur. In the old Punjab, the district of Lahore was also in Majha.

MALWA—Southern Punjab, comprising the districts of Ludhiana. Ferozepore and the former Patiala and East Punjab States.

MASSANDS—Professional priests or missionaries.

MOOL MANTRA—Basic Incantation or fundamental creed of Sikh Religion–*Ek-Oankar, Sat-Naam, Karta-Purkh, Nir-bhau, Nir-vair, Akal-Murat, Ajuni, Sai-bhang, Gur-prasad*. (God is the One Indivisible Supreme Being; Reality; Eternal; Creator-Immanent; Without Fear; Without Rancour; Timeless Form; Unborn; Self-Existent; Realized by the holy Preceptor's Grace).

These are attributes of God whom the Sikhs are enjoined to worship, to the exclusion of other gods or deities.

NAAM SIMRAN—Repitition of God's names or attributes, with concentration of mind and devotion,

NIHANG—A full-fledged Amritdhari Singh, who adheres to traditional modes of dress, weaponery and speech of Guru Gobind Singh's time.

NIRMALAS—A sect among the Sikhs, whose followers, dressed in clean saffron-coloured clothes, lead the life of puritans, spreading education and teachings of Guru Nanak.

NIT-NEM—Regular habit of reciting certain compositions of Gurbani everyday, particularly Japji, Jaap Sahib, Ten Swaiyyas, Reh-ras and Kirtan Sohila.

PANJ PIARAS—The five beloved Sikhs who were initially baptised by Guru Gobind Singh, viz. Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Himmat Singh, Bhai Mohkam Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh.

PATIT—A Sikh who becomes an apostate by committing anyone of the four basic *Kurahats* (sins).

POTHI —Devotional Book.

PRASAD—Part of food sanctified by offering to a deity or guru and later on distributed among devotees.

RAGI —One who sings Gurbani in Ragas.

RAHAT-MARYADA—The code of discipline prescribed by the Sikh Gurus. It comprises internal as well as external disciplines.

SACHKHAND—True abode of the Formless God. Also the name given to the shrine in Abchal Nagar, Nanded in Maharashtra, where Guru Gobind Singh passed away in 1708 A.D.

SAHAJDHARI—A Sikh who develops himself slowly along the path of following the Khalsa injunctions strictly.

SAMADHI—Mausoleum or memorial set up to commemorate the death of a leading individual.

SANGAT—Sikh congregation.

SATSANG—Company of holy persons.

SIROPAO—A scarf or a turban offered in the Sikh tradition to an individual in token of esteem and appreciation of his services. Robe of honour.

SOHILA (KIRTAN)—An anthology of five hymns recited by the Sikhs at bedtime.

SUKHMANI—Song of Mental Peace. A series of hymns in twenty four parts (*ashtpadis*), composed by Guru Arjan Dev and recited by the Sikhs before sunrise.

TATT-KHALSA—Pure or True Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh, as against the Bandai Khalsa who were followers of Banda Singh Bahadur.

UDASIS—A sect of recluses, collateral with Sikhism and owning their origin from Baba Sri Chand, the eldest son of Guru Nanak.

WADA GHALUGHARA—The great holocaust which occurred in Feb. 1762 A.D. and in which thirty to thirty five thousand Sikhs died fighting with Ahmad Shah Durrani's forces at Kupuhirha.

WAHEGURU—Wonderful Lord—The ecstatic name with which Sikhs are enjoined to remember God.

WAND CHHAKNA—The Sikh tradition of sharing food with others—one of the three basic concepts of Sikh religion, the other two being *Naam Japana* (rememberance of God's Name) and *Kirt Karni* (earning of livlihood by honest labour).

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SOME OPINIONS

Shri B.P.L. Bedi, M.A. (Pb.), B.A. Hons. (Oxon), Alexander Von Humboldt Research Scholar (Berlin), Director, World Centre for Conscience.

I have had the pleasure and privilege of Gyani Ishar Singh Ji Nara reading to me the entire manuscript, page to page, in the pre-publication stage of the Safar Namah and Zafar Namah.

Gyani Ji's depth of scholarship, his unique capacity of critical appraisal of events, his dedication to research and intuitive awareness of the validity of data, all these I have fully known and admired through having read his great and classic biographics of Sri Hazoor Baba Sri Chand Maharaj and Raja Yogi, the life story of General Baba Sahib Singh Bedi Maharaj, the Rajguru of the Punjabi Kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Gyani Ji's recent classic performance of highest merit has been the book entitled "Vaisakh Nahin Kartik" settling with finality the controverted birth date of Sri Hazoor Satguru Baba Nanak Maharaj.

With this background knowledge of the distinction with which Gyani Ishar Singh Ji wields the pen, I heard the manuscript of Safar Namah Zafar Namah, not only with rapt attention but with waves of affection and appreciation surging through my inner self.

Safar Namah Zafar Namah is not a mere biography of the great and glorious Guru Gobind Singh Maharaj, nor it is only a book of deep research based on profound erudition. Safar Namah Zafar Namah is a Saga Sacred written through inspiration which only the Great Guru Maharaj himself could confer through Grace Divine on Gyani Ji. The evidence of Divine Grace inspiring the pen is to be

found in the birth scene of Guru Maharaj itself. Gyani Ishar Singh Ji's depiction of the glory of the divine baby at the presentation Darbar for the devotees at Patna Sahib, bristles with flashes of inner light that flowed through an inspired pen.....

And then, again, the grandeur of the Great Guru Gobind Singh Maharaj's last moments and the resplendance of the manner in which the Divine in the Great Guru manifested itself in preparing for death; all has been so poignantly and brilliantly portrayed that no human being can remain unmoved to the very inner depth of his being. And, indeed, where is an eye to be found which would not get moist with tears that ecstacy alone can inspire ?

Between these two mountain peaks of the scenes of birth and death flows the biographic stream of events, page after page. Every drop in the divine stream of Guru Maharaj's life glistens with the sweat of toil in founding the great Khalsa, or the blood of martyrdom shed in augmenting the dignity of the Warriors of Truth. Every page of "Safar Namah Te Zafar Namah" appears diamond-studded as we read through the stage by stage depiction by Gyani Ishar Singh Ji of the battle route of the great Guru Maharaj.

The life of Guru Gobind Singh Maharaj was dedicated to battle for Truth and Justice. Battle route and not travels is the only description applicable to the journeys of Guru Gobind Singh Maharaj, since every moment, awake or asleep, he was dedicated to battle in fulfilling his mission Divine, which he defined himself as "Annihilating the wicked and vanquishing the oppressors." The glorious battle route for the fulfilment of this sacred mission has found in Gyani Ishar Singh Ji a unique and devoted servant for exploring it with scholarly precision, characteristic of Gyani Ji as a mature, research-loving, erudite author.

I have no doubt that "Safar Namah Te Zafar Namah" will live as one of the immortal narrations of Sikh history and that generations to come will remember Gyani Ishar Singh Nara with affection and gratitude, a tribute which posterity pays to the dedication of warriors of the swords and pens.

I may very respectfully add that the leaders of the Panth would do well to take the circulation of this great work in hand through the S.G.P.C. and other Gurdwara Committees. Popularising this inspired book to the extent of its reaching the shelf of every educated Sikh home and the library of every educational institution is their task. Performing this duty should in no sense be construed as an act of patronage to the author but as symbol of homage to the greatness of the service he has rendered to Sikh history. No less it should be graciously bounden on the Panthic leaders to take adequate steps which would liberate old and aged Gyani Ishar Singh Ji from his day to day struggle for bread, by granting him a liberal life allowance, thus enabling him to carry on his great and unique research work for the rest of his very precious life span. May he be blessed in his inspired work for long long years and may all be blessed with the light of his luminous pen.

Bakhshi Gurcharan Singh, M.A., Advocate, Supreme Court of India.

This biography of Guru Gobind Singh Ji is very praiseworthy. Gyani Ishar Singh Nara has written it after a lot of hard labour. Biographies of the great Guru written earlier mostly followed the conventional lines and were based on the writings of Kavi Santokh Singh and other chroniclers who preceded him. But Gyani Ishar Singh Nara checked those writings by making personal visits to different places connected with the life of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and assessed their correctness with local traditions and historical accuracy. In doing so, his association with the late Sant Teja Singh, double M.A. during the latter's missionary tours, greatly helped him. This is what makes this book valuable and worthy of appreciation.

Considering the merit of the book, the Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee offered Rupees 2100/- and a woollen shawl as 'siropao' to Gyaniji. They also asked me to go through the book and make necessary suggestions for Gyani ji and the Gurdwara Committee. The study of the book impressed me greatly about the hard work put in and research made by the author. In my personal capacity, the

following quotations from our holy scriptures have made a deep effect on my mind :--

"Aap Nath Nathi Sabh Jan ki Ridh Sidh Awra Saad"

"Shabad Jiti Siddh Mandli"

"Gur Sangat Bani Bina Dooji Oat Nahi Hai Rae"

"Natak Chetak Keeai Kukaja"

I, therefore, believe that Guru Gobind Singh's greatest miracles are infusion of martial spirit among the helpless and down-trodden people through the administration of the baptism of the double-edged sword, creation of Khalsa Brotherhood, the battle of Chamkaur against heavy odds, sacrifices of the members of his family and the composition of high class and magnificient literature. In the light of this observation I impressed on Gyani Ji to accept only those traditional stories which are found correct after local verification. At the same time, we cannot ignore the Guru's injunction contained in the following quotations from Gurbani :--

"Gur Keha Sa Kar Kamavoh,

Gur Ki Karni Kahe Dhavoh".

I am thankful to Gyani Ji that he has accepted many of my suggestions. As a result, this book deserves to find a place among the collections in all Sikh homes, schools, colleges, gurdwaras, liabraries and other institutions.

I congratulate Gyani Ishar Singh Nara and the Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee on the compilation of this book.

Prof. Puran Singh, M.A., Deptt. of Divinity, Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College, Delhi.

Sikh history is not based on mythology. It is based on faith, self-confidence and sacrifices. The Sikh Gurus, from Guru Nanak Dev to Guru Gobind Singh, have created such a society which is founded not on assumption or imagination but on hard facts of life. By introducing the concepts of Naam, Amrit and Sangat, they eliminated casteism and provincial differences amongst the people.

Giani Ishar Singh Nara is one of the leading historians of the Sikh community. He has taken care to see that only

those historical events are accepted which conform to Gurmat Philosophy and Sikh Conventions. In "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama", he has brought out valuable information about which the Sikhs were, by and large, unaware. His ability to write, his courage and determination prove that Gurmukhs are not impaired by age. We are grateful to Waheguru that he has given scholars like Giani Ishar Singh Nara to us in this scientific and material age. He writes historical books not as a profession but out of love and devotion. He is a Giani of oriental school—thought and is also a devout poet.

Giani Ji's other books, like Biographies of Baba Sri Chand and Baba Sahib Singh Bedi (Raja Yogi) and "Vaisakh Nahi Katak" etc. are also worth reading.

Prof. Gurbachan Singh Bachan, M.A.

Gyani Ishar Singh Nara is a historian who is steeped in Gursikh traditions and who has love of Sikh Panth at heart. By writing *"Safar-Nama Te Zafar-Nama"* he has removed several misunderstandings about Guru Gobind Singh by advancing sound arguments and giving reliable proofs. Not only the faithful but even those who are considered to be intellectuals of the modern age connot deny the research work that has gone for an old person like Giani Ji to go from place to place and collect and check up relevant source materials. The size of the book would show how much effort he has made in compiling this volume.

A people's historic past serves as a beaconlight for building up its future. By presenting this book to the people Gyani Ji has served a very useful purpose and has also shown what faith and sincere effort in a righteous cause can achieve.

Dr. Kala Singh Bedi

I have read with great interest and joy the chapter on Banda Singh Bahadur in Gyani Ishar Singh Nara's book "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama". By extensive research he has proved that Banda Singh Bahadur had received the

Guru's baptism. While writing historic events, he has not ignored the concepts of Gurmat Philosophy. Every word of the book reflects the essence of history, truth and love for the Guru.

Giani Ji is one of the learned research scholars of Sikh history and I wish and pray for his long life so that he may be able to produce more literature of this nature.

Bhai Joginder Singh (Moni Ji), Takht Abchal Nagar, Sach Khand Durbar, Nanded.

Giani Ishar Singh Nara has read out to me his book "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama". He has written it after doing a lot of research work here in Nanded. I was really filled with joy and inspiration on hearing its contents and hope that other readers will also have similar feelings. I pray that Guru Maharaj may grant him health and greater ability to write books on Sikh history.

Giani Manmohan Singh, Sachkhand, Nanded

Giani Ishar Singh Nara has prepared the manuscript of his book "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama" after strenuous labour and research. He has enlightened the community about many unknown aspects of Sikh history through his power of pen and intuition. It is really very creditable for him, particularly in his advanced age.

Our religious leaders and institutions should admire and honour such efforts and encourage the writers by petronising their works. The Guru will bless those who do so.

Prof. Sohan Singh Irani M. A. (Pb.), M. Ed. (Delhi)

Giani Ishar Singh Ji S/o S. Mangal Singh is a well-known Sikh historian and Research Scholar. He is the author of "RAJA YOGI", (History of Baba Sahib Singh Bedi) "Biography of Baba Sri Chand Bedi" and many other books. His books are very popular and read all over India and abroad.

In the present book, "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama" the author has given his best and dealt with many delicate and

intricate incidents in the life of our Tenth Master, with great clarity, vividness and in the simplest manner. This entire book is bound to touch the very core of all devotional readers.

The author is a master-mind who like Rabinder Nath Tagore is self-read as he never went to any University.

I have the happy privilege to know the author from close quarters. "GREAT MEN ARE BORN AND NOT MADE", comes out true in case of Giani Ji also. The suthor's mother Shrimati Mathro Devi, possessed all the virtues of greatness. Whoseever entered her door was deeply touched by her splendid hospitality and true devotional spirit.

To no small extent does the author owe his humiltity and greatness to the benign influence of his mother who laid down her life at the altar of freedom by burning herself alive in the month of March 1947 during the Indo-Pakistan riots in village NARA.

Bedi Parupkar Singh, Special Executive Magistrate, Colaba Bombay.

In writing "Safar Nama Te Zafar Nama", on the occasion of the Third Centenary Celebrations of Guru Gobind Singh, Giani Ishar Singh Nara had rendered valuable service to the Sikh Panth. His strenuous efforts in compiling this memorable work was duly appreciated by Takht Sri Patna Sahib, Takht Sri Hazur Sahib, Nanded, S.G.P.C.' Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and main Singh Sabhas all over the country. He was duly awarded Siropaos by all these organisations, in accordance with Sikh traditions, which he amply deserved.

Corrigendum

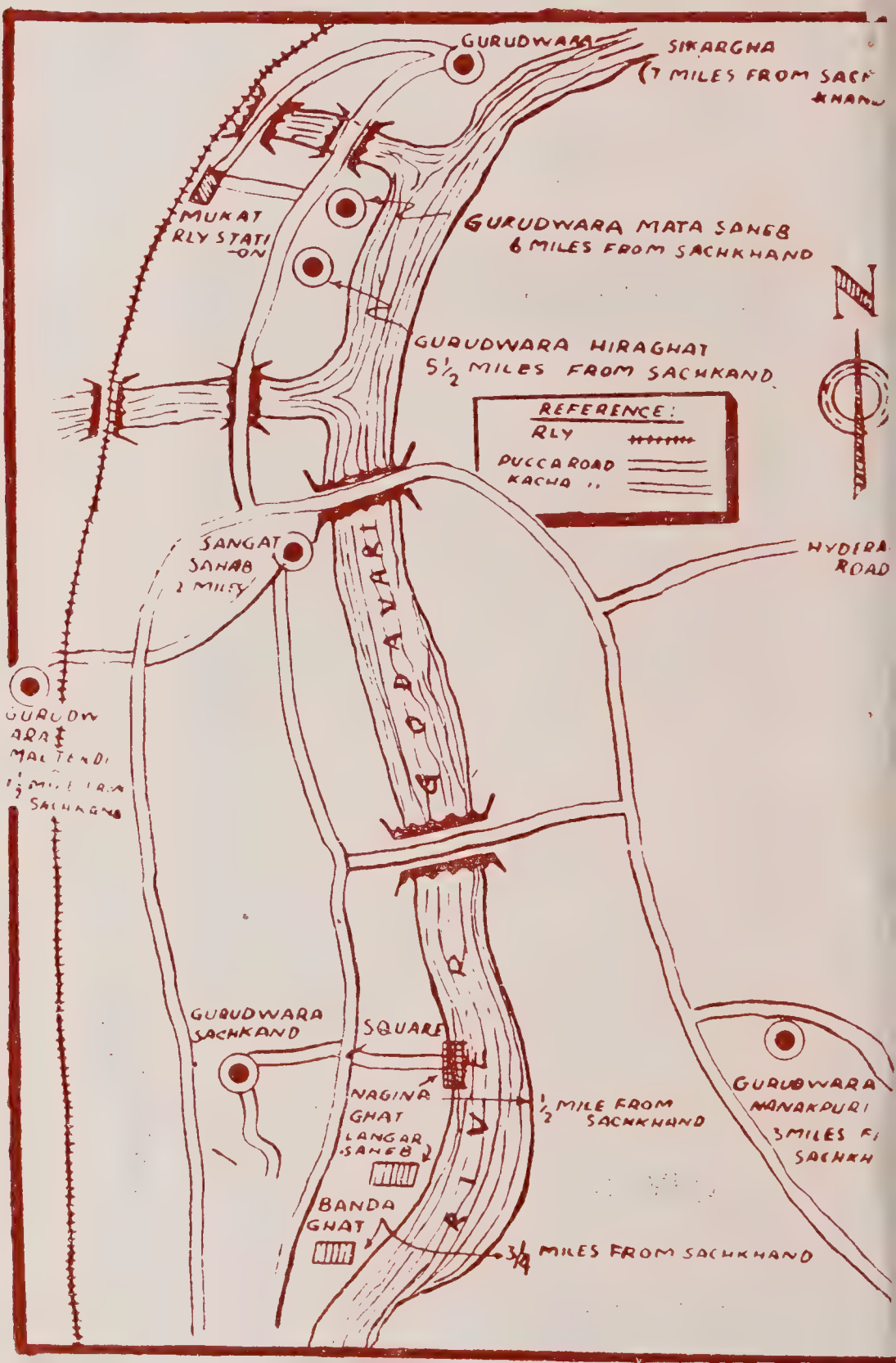
Page No.	Line	For	Read
5	14	prephesied	prophesied
6	33	Rhan	Khan
14	33	tought	taught
15	13	Eminabad	Emanabad
16	28	become	became
20	24	reverred	revered
21	1	crseu	curse
21	31	dignatories	dignitaries
23	15	name	named
32	12	struck	stuck
32	28	Surroundedd	Surrounded
36	7	stuck	struck
44	26	ਤਿਯਾ	ਤ੍ਰਿਯਾ
44	28	he	be
45	7	ਰਾ ਵਿ	ਰਾਵਿ
46	12	agument	argument
46	31	advise	advice
48	4	ਤਾਡ	ਛਾਡ
49	11	ner (after until)	her
49	25	—	omit 'the' before 'all'
50	13	accordingly	according
51	33	Inmortal	Immortal
64	24	tdat	that
79	31	ee	see
88	19	secrety	secretly
93	23	sister's	wife's
95	10	tne	the
96	29	goldern	golden
96	32	end	and
121	11	surved	served
123	21	deceipt	deceit

Page No.	Line	For	Read
139	17	the	he
145	37	daggar	dagger
148	15	they	the
149	33	after 'we'	add 'be'
157	9	a	an
164	31	ann	and
165	33	ਗੜ	ਗੁੜ
174	34	minth	ninth
188	29	an	and
188	29	and	an
215	29	0	10
216	8	hus	has
242	26	hade	had
289	25	feltters	fetters
318	1	Sotbir	Satbir
318	54	Shori	Short

The Author

Giani Ishar Singh Nara

Sketch map showing location of Gurdwaras in Sri Abchal Nagar, Nanded



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